Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-94-159 *17 August 1994*

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Latin American Economic System on U.S. Accords

PA1708023794 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1759 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Caracas, 16 Aug (EFE)—A bulletin issued today by the Latin American Economic System (SELA) states the U.S. position when negotiating integration agreements with Latin American countries seems to be "deliberately ambiguous," and, reportedly, its goal is "to increase its ability to exert pressure."

The bulletin states the United States uses several formulas to reach integration agreements. These formulas range from taking into consideration the volume of trade exchanges to those granting privileges to countries with which they negotiate, such as the so called "a la carte agreements." SELA states these agreements, which were signed "prior to the free trade," give the United States the advantage of "obtaining benefits at a minimum cost," because they are negotiated quickly and are easily implemented.

The bulletin does not explain why the a la carte agreements are more beneficial for the United States than for the other country, but it states the United States also receives, through these agreements, "the type of concessions that would be normally negotiated within the framework of a free trade agreement without having to give anything in exchange."

Despite this, the bulletin recognizes this type of agreement also provides certain benefits for the Latin American and Caribbean nations, because "they generate a more appropriate climate for investment" and because it represents a step forward "toward signing a free trade agreement with the United States."

Giving examples based on quantitative considerations, SELA cites the agreement signed by Canada and Mexico, given trade between the two countries is in the range of $280 billion a year.

Regarding the agreements reached from a qualitative standpoint, SELA sites the case of Chile. The fact that this agreement is "an example of economic liberalization" was based on the volume of trade of only $3.9 billion a year.

SELA recalls that, after Canada and Mexico, Brazil is the United States' most important commercial partner in the hemisphere, with trade amounting to $13 billion, followed by Venezuela, with $12 billion, Colombia, with $6 billion, and the Dominican Republic with $5 billion.

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Cuba

Radio Cites Pentagon on Guantanamo Refugee Incidents

FL1608120694 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1106 GMT 16 Aug 94

[From the "First Thing" program]

[Text] The Pentagon reported on 15 August that 45 Haitians and 20 U.S. military personnel were injured on 13 August during incidents involving refugees at the U.S. base at Guantanamo. Douglas Kennett, Pentagon spokesman, said that members of the U.S. Military Police who sustained bruises remained hospitalized on 16 August. The source added that it took four hours to restore order on the base, after minor injuries were caused by the rocks and assorted objects that were being hurled.

Ministry Assails U.S. Shelter for Haitians at Guantanamo

PA1608221394 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 2109 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Havana, 16 Aug (PL)—Cuba today reiterated its repudiation of Washington's use of the Guantanamo Naval Base to house Haitians who are trying to reach the United States to escape the political and economic crisis prevailing in their country.

The Cuban Foreign Ministry reaffirmed its position in the wake of disturbances staged last weekend by the 15,000 refugees, who demanded the U.S. Government grant them political asylum.

Some 120 demonstrators struggled to swim to the area where Cuban border guards are monitoring the naval base, according to U.S. Defense Department reports.

"In addition to condemning the use of a portion of our nation to hold people who are considered undesirable in the United States, we also condemn the illegal presence of U.S. troops in this enclave since 1902," a Foreign Ministry spokesman told PRENSA LATINA.

The hijacking of three boats in the past two weeks and their subsequent arrival in Florida, where the illegal immigrants were received (including the murderer of a Cuban marine lieutenant), has opened a new chapter of friction in relations between Washington and Havana—relations that were severed by the United States in 1961.

Sources from human rights organizations that defend the rights of Haitians said the refugees at the Guantanamo Naval Base are unhappy with living conditions there.

The leasing of the enclave was imposed on Cuba by the United States in 1902 to create a naval station there. The current Cuban Government has denounced this agreement, which it considers illegal and a violation of its sovereignty, and it also has denounced the presence of U.S. military forces on its territory.

Large numbers of Haitian refugees are hoping to be transferred to other countries in the region, which (under previous agreements with the White House) have offered temporary shelter, while the crisis in Haiti—a crisis that began in September 1991 following the overthrow of constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide—is resolved.

EFE Reports Calm Returns to Guantanamo After Riots

FL1708021094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] The news agency EFE reports from Washington that calm seems to have returned to Guantanamo U.S. Naval Base following the Saturday rioting by 750 of the 15,000 Haitian refugees awaiting political asylum in the United States, and confined to the base by U.S. authorities. Spokesmen of organizations caring for the refugees reported that the Haitian refugees in Guantanamo left Haiti hoping to make it to the United States. However, the refugees are realizing that neither this, nor a return to Haiti in the immediate future, is possible. They therefore fear they will remain trapped on the base.

GRANMA: No Political Will by U.S. on Immigration

PA1608172594 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 0937 GMT 14 Aug 94

[Text] Havana, 14 Aug (PL)—Experts and analysts said in Havana today that U.S. authorities still show no political willingness to stop and prevent boat seizures and to punish individuals who try to emigrate illegally from Cuba to the United States. Olga Miranda, vice president of the Cuban Association of International Law Jurists [Asociacion Cubana de Derecho Internacional], said: "In these 35 years, Washington has never returned those who perpetrated such actions against Cuba. None of them have even been penalized."

In violent incidents that cost two people their lives, in the past two weeks armed individuals have commandeered three boats trying to emigrate illegally to the United States. The most recent incident took place in the Mariel harbor zone on 8 August when Lieutenant Roberto Aguilar Reyes was shot twice and killed by Leonel Macia Gonzalez, as the latter was stealing a boat that he later sailed to the United States with 25 people aboard.

In statements on these events to the official newspaper GRANMA, Miranda said U.S. authorities have a list of undesirables, like terrorists, pirates, criminals, and even Communists. According to this list, people like Macias will not be accepted as refugees or granted asylum. "They will most likely make a show of the whole affair and take the issue to a grand jury. If the grand jury decides there is no crime, as it can be anticipated, the

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U.S. Government will say the matter was taken to court and that the administration of justice ruled according to its own law. Everything would be a farce again," she said.

In the United States, Miranda has accompanied Cuban citizens summoned to testify on ship seizures and plane hijackings, as happened last year with an Aero Caribbean plane and to a Cuban fisherman, whose hands were tied and whose boat was taken. In every case, however, the jury ruled there was no crime. "Washington is not politically willing to punish those who perpetrate these actions against Cuba. The United States thus not only violates international law and its own laws, but encourages repetition of these crimes," the Cuban jurist added.

GRANMA has accused U.S. authorities of "protecting hijackers and assassins, none of whom have been punished."

In addition, remarks on this problem by high-ranking officials in President William Clinton's administration only seem to confirm President Fidel Castro's assertion that the United States encourages illegal immigration from Cuba.

The Cuban leader has warned: "Either the United States takes effective and quick measures to bar illegal departures or we will remove all impediments to any boats attempting to sail to the United States or any U.S. boats wishing to come to Cuba."

In this morning's issue, GRANMA shows no surprise at recent remarks by U.S. Secretary of Justice [title as received] Janet Reno and Secretary of State Warren Christopher. In an article on these remarks, the newspaper commented that they "were to be expected."

Although President Clinton has not yet commented on these events, Christopher said over the weekend: "We will continue our present policy on the illegal immigration of Cubans." In addition, Reno said those Cubans coming on their own, including those who commandeer boats and hijack planes, will be allowed to enter the United States.

"So, let us see. On one hand, the United States has failed to fulfill the immigration agreement to issue 20,000 immigrant visas every year and, on the other, the United States openly and unashamedly encourages illegal departures," GRANMA commented.

GRANMA: 'Distant Shore' Runs Risk of Military Confrontation

PA1608213794 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1617 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Havana, 16 Aug (PL)—Operation Distant Shore, which is designed to check mass immigration into the United States, runs the risk of military confrontation, government circles warned here today.

The reported naval blockade to prevent ships from sailing from U.S. territory to Cuba and from the island to the United States is just one aspect of the plan drafted by the government in Washington, the official newspaper GRANMA stated.

In truth, according to THE SUN SENTINEL newspaper in 1993, Distant Shore also includes plans to have special Justice Department units and covert agents infiltrate Florida neighborhoods to eavesdrop on departure plans, GRANMA added. Twenty-one federal agencies, including the Coast Guard, Customs, INS, the Pentagon, and the CIA will participate in the operation, the organ of the Communist Party of Cuba said.

Distant Shore, which in actuality is an old plan, has been revamped in connection with Cuba's avowed determination to stop protecting U.S. borders if the U.S. Government fails to take proper measures to prevent illegal departures.

According to GRANMA, Washington is frightened by the possibility of another Mariel boatlift—the 1980 mass emigration that threatened the infallibility of the U.S. superpower. At that time, 98 Coast Guard vessels, 20 Navy ships, and more than 100 aircraft were deployed, the newspaper recalled.

GRANMA warned: There is no certainty that the danger will not repeat itself. The publication noted that 65 warships and two task forces, which include the deployment of more than 4,500 military personnel, are in the Caribbean and there is heavy military air traffic in the region.

Also, a mock invasion featuring live ammunition was conducted in Vieques, Puerto Rico, in late July and early August. Therefore, along with the crowding of more than 16,000 Haitians at the Guantanamo Naval Base, this adds to the complexity of the situation in the region, GRANMA added.

Citing another element of the U.S.-introduced tension on the island, the paper mentions the stepped-up campaign of anti-Cuba radio stations that are urging those who want to emigrate to hurl themselves into the sea or seize boats.

Nothing is accidental in the history of Washington's hostility toward Cuba. Because of this, every action will be met with the best and most appropriate response, GRANMA concluded.

PCC Secretary Blames U.S. for 15 Aug Events in Mariel

PA1708022794 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Aug 94

[Report by Susana del Calvo from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] Concerning the events that took place in the port city of Mariel yesterday [15 August], our colleague Susana del Calvo has traveled to that part of Havana

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Province and has talked to Candido Palmero, first secretary of the Cuban Communist Party [PCC]. The Havana Province Defense Council has evaluated the situation, and Candido Palmero, first secretary of the PCC in this region, has talked to us about it.

[Begin recording] [Palmero] Our people's reaction and mobilization capability is incredible. Their fighting spirit is high. It is very, very high. I believe this was the thing that defeated them—the mass gathering of thousands and thousands of Havana residents in front of the ship. Every resident of the neighborhood was there. Even relatives of those who were on the ship were there. They were urging them to leave the ship. Their spirit was always there. We have a marvelous people; we have courageous, hardworking, Fidelist people. I can confirm this because I have been here for the past 26 hours.

[Del Calvo] You just said that the families played an outstanding role.

[Palmero] Yes, their relatives did. Many of the relatives were revolutionary workers, and they went there to urge them to get off the ship, and they did so. There was no pressure at all. Their relatives went there to ask them to get off the ship. This helped greatly. The family participation method was very political and revolutionary.

The revolution was created precisely for this reason—to prevent anyone from being mistreated. Even our enemies are respected. The family was not responsible for their children going onto the ship, people who were 15 and 16 years old. There were criminals and prostitutes there, and this group of undesirables was well represented. The scum of our society was there. There also were confused people there, but there really was a lot of the other kind of people there.

[Del Calvo] We saw there were confused people there, but they themselves said they were able to see that there were criminals who were directing the whole operation.

[Palmero] This is true. They were people with tattoos, people who have cases pending with society, and people who have fled from general military service. They also included people who have escaped from prison, and others who have been released. These are the people who see their paradise in the United States. Because the United States accepts the scum of Cuban society, sooner or later the United States will have them and others like them over there, and then we will see what the United States does. As one comrade said a short while ago: You cannot make candy with manure. They certainly will never make candy with these people.

[Unidentified reporter] [Words indistinct]

[Palmero] Representatives from the shipping company were the first to come, and they were there the whole time. There were no complaints. The political and moral spirit of the revolutionary cadres and workers was very high.

[Del Calvo] How is it possible for this to happen?

[Palmero] As well as for other reasons, this happens because—and this is what the commander in chief said in a recent interview—well, it is because of the blockade, the economic difficulties, and the encouragement from the United States through all its media. They are waiting for them with their little hearts open wide. The song of the siren can fool any confused person. They leave because of the problems we have, and because of the songs being sung. They are encouraged to carry out acts of disobedience, to break things, and to murder people. The United States encourages people to leave illegally; it is the guilty party. It is a minority of society that wants to find solutions to our problems through such means—means we cannot accept. [end recording]

GRANMA Articles Denounce U.S. Policies

PA1708023394 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Aug 94

[From the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] GRANMA, the Cuban daily newspaper, published today four articles on its center pages denouncing the U.S. policies toward the island, as reaffirmed recently by Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Attorney General Janet Reno. The policies are directed at undermining the image of the Cuban revolution by way of a well implemented ideological war.

Culture Minister Armando Hart spotlights how imperialism and its allies plan to discredit our national identity. Hart says the strategy is to promote the idea that our national identity is an unattainable utopia while encouraging actions that would lead to anarchy and violence. The culture minister underscores the fact in his article that U.S. ideological centers use the extremely powerful mass media sources they have at their disposal in order to advance their purpose. Furthermore, he states, they are spending more funds than they did against Socialism in Eastern Europe.

Nidia Diaz also denounces the million dollar information plan deployed by the United States and Washington to distort the island's true situation. When all U.S. efforts fail to destroy the Cuban revolution, the Diaz article states, they turn to the migration phenomenon, which they themselves have encouraged, as an argument of the alleged discontent among Cubans.

Cuban analyst Pablo Valiente also addressed the hypocritical U.S. migratory policy toward Cuba. In his article published by GRANMA, he points out how all the stations broadcasting to the island since 14 July are calling for the people to set out to sea, to hijack government vessels, to commit acts of vandalism, and to rise against the powers of state.

Gustavo Robreno, GRANMA deputy director, recalls the U.S. city of Miami welcomed the war criminals of the Fulgencio Batista dictatorship. This foundation is one of

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today's fascist mafia, which dreams of grabbing Cuba and turning it over to the United States again. When the U.S. secretary of state and the attorney general reaffirm that U.S. policy toward Cuba will not change, Robreno adds, we can conclude they are admitting that that country will continue to be a safe haven for murderers and traitors.

Commentary Blames U.S. for Unrest, Urges Mobilization

PA1708025594 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Aug 94

[Commentary by Roberto Morejon from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] Incidents occurring in Cuba since 13 July, when a tugboat capsized after being diverted to the United States, confirms the intensification of the ideological struggle on the island, which undoubtedly has resulted from the serious economic crisis caused primarily by foreign factors.

The deliberate reinforcement of the U.S. economic blockade, taking advantage of the fact that Cuba virtually has been left without economic assistance in the wake of the disappearance of its former trade partners, has undermined the living conditions of the Cuban people. Moreover, Cubans are finding it difficult to come up with more efficient ways to increase production.

Washington has always believed that this scenario would lead to the collapse of the current social plan, as occurred in Eastern Europe in 1989. After realizing it had misjudged the situation, it redoubled its hostility toward the island.

The majority of Cubans who support the current political program—a program that preserves the main achievements of socialism—have reaffirmed in these recent days of combat their determination to defend our independence. There is no doubt, however, that segments of the population comprising dissidents, people opposed to the government, and others confused by foreign propaganda are being encouraged to defy order and discipline and even to kill other human beings.

It is within this context that recent incidents have taken place involving public disturbances, attacks, the diversion of vessels, murders, and injuries against those in charge of preventing at any cost the anarchy the United States and its extreme right-wing immigrants would like to encourage here to install a social system dependent on the northern power. The latest incident linked to the capricious U.S. immigration policy that encourages illegal departures occurred Monday, when hundreds of Cubans boarded a Maltese-registered vessel anchored in Mariel, west of Havana, in an attempt to go to the United States.

Top Cuban officials have issued warnings against illegal departures, and Cuban authorities are ready for action. In addition, people are more alert to counter provocations encouraged from abroad. Today, as on many other occasions during the past 35 years, popular mobilization is the main guarantee for the current social system.

'Straight Talk' Addresses Illegal Migration

FL1608142694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 15 Aug 94

["Straight Talk": Studio discussion between host Carlos Santana Ojeda and guest Renato Recio, from TRABAJADORES newspaper; date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Santana] As you all know, hundreds of antisocial individuals boarded a Maltese tanker moored at the port of Mariel on 14 August. Renato, where should we begin?

[Recio] As you mentioned, this latest incident—that is, a large group of citizens—including women and children, who, as usual, were used as shields and as hostages—taking over a fuel tanker—represents a serious escalation of the disorganized and uncontrollable illegal migration to the United States.

This vessel is reportedly operated by a tiny crew that is well versed in the stringent safety measures required to operate a tanker. It is truly dangerous for hundreds of untrained, undisciplined people to board such a vessel, people who should not be aboard a ship that can explode under any circumstances.

[Santana] You reportedly can't even smoke on board.

[Recio] Not even smoke. This could end in a fuel spill off the Cuban coast, off the Florida coast—in case the vessel goes there—or on the high seas. Cuba and the United States face a complex and difficult problem.

[Santana] Is this event a coincidence? Or is it part of a logical progression of recent events in Cuba?

[Recio] This is no coincidence. Coincidence is precipitated by nondemonstrable, natural, logical causes. In this case, there is a veritable fever, a period of effervescence regarding the problem of those who want to leave Cuba and who, to this end, are resorting to illegal, violent, and even terrorist means. This is no coincidence: The United States has been widely known to carry out a policy of, on the one hand, encouraging illegal departures and, on the other, maintaining the blockade, the constant and complete siege, and pressures of all kinds on Cuba—economically, politically, a veritable psychological war. What is missing? Organizers, people actually motivating these events toward a political end. This might or might not be the case. I do not want to guess. However, there clearly are specific circumstances encouraging what I describe as disorganization or the inability to control the expressions of or actions of certain social groups, those we label antisocials, disenfranchised, people who do not work, people who do not subscribe to revolutionary

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ideals, people who only seek personal and individual interests at the highest level. This type of person believes that this is the right time to realize his dream of reaching the United States. As you know, this creates a serious headache for the United States. Both nations face a very difficult dilemma regarding this tactical issue, namely the immigration conflict.

[Santana] You just mentioned that this causes the United States problems. How might this incident affect Cuba's domestic stability?

[Recio] The Interior Ministry note recognizes the seriousness of this incident and stresses that under no circumstances can we allow these criminals to take the ships that are needed to help Cuba's dire economic situation, particularly the energy and fuel situations. This is unacceptable. Therefore, we cannot allow those who hijack a ship that is fulfilling an essential economic function for Cuba to get away with it. This must be avoided at all costs. This is what makes the issue so grave. A precedent must not be set. There might be solutions, certain levels of negotiations, once the incident has reached a phase like this one. These people do not want to hurt the Cuban economy but to go to the United States. These people are responding to the U.S. invitation to come on over. Secretary of State Christopher stated just a few hours ago that the United States does not plan to change its Cuban refugee policy.

[Santana] It plans to continue accepting those who leave Cuba illegally.

[Recio] Yes. They call them refugees and are willing to welcome those arriving illegally to the United States. These people are simply responding to a U.S. invitation. As I mentioned earlier, this has consequences for the United States because they have a serious problem of immigration from all the underdeveloped countries on this continent and from continents as far away as Asia. Even the average U.S. citizen is involved in the debate over tighter immigration laws.

The policy on Cuban refugees—on which very strange measures have been adopted to encourage the arrival of these people in an attempt to destabilize Cuba and to suggest that the Cuban regime is less than viable and that the Cuban people are discontent—has its limits. They have a very strong and horrible fear that there will be a replay of the Mariel boat lift, that some 100,000 or so people will arrive on their shores. This fear is undergoing a test of fire: While there has not been a a mass exodus, involving large numbers of boats or boats leaving Miami to pick up relatives, a mini-Mariel is certainly under way. About 5,000 people arrived in the United States by August. In light of the readiness to leave, which we discussed earlier, we can assume that this figure will grow even more rapidly. A total of 10,000 or 15,000 people could arrive in the United States by year's end. The mini-Mariel does not go unnoticed in a city like Miami, which is already saturated with immigrants. Unemployment, social disorder, and burdens on the state and federal budgets discourage them from accepting more immigrants.

I also think that U.S. public opinion will consider the problems that a massive influx of immigrants is bound to create between the United States and Cuba, problems that could be very serious. History has proved that the results, effectiveness, and direction of U.S. foreign policy are somewhat inconsistent until the core of U.S. public opinion becomes aware of the problem. The problem of Cubans illegally emigrating en masse could reach the heart of U.S. social life and have undesirable consequences for U.S. leaders directing the blockade policy.

[Santana] Can you see how contradictory this whole thing is? They are not taking precautions against the mass immigration that they fear. They are not taking steps to prevent this.

[Recio] They are mistaken in their thinking. They are making decisions on Cuba as we speak. It is important to remember that the United States believes that its political actions are rational, even though they are putting Cuba in a very difficult economic position or at least in a very tense political position. However, there are great revolutionary reserves and potential.

Cuba's problems will never be resolved in favor of the United States, much less in two, three, or four months. The problem of the Cuban resistance is destined to be very long, so long as some affirm that Cuba's resistance will last hundreds of years no matter what. We have a predisposition to fight.

Those in Miami who are packing their bags as they have done so many times in the last 35 years, thinking that Cuba is falling apart and that the people are leaving because they want to leave, will just have to unpack and put their things back in the closet thousands of times more. The United States and the Clinton administration are mistaken if they think that they need not worry about a prolonged conflict. This conflict is destined to be very long. If they maintain their current policy, large numbers of undesirables will arrive in Florida and the United States and the system will be overwhelmed.

[Santana] Don't you think that it is about time for the Cuban Government to react and express its position?

[Recio] The Cuban Government has never stopped reacting. It is acting calmly and with foresight in the conflict. However, no one doubts the proverbial audacity, valor, and courage of the Cuban people, their leadership, and, most importantly, Fidel.

I would like to add that we must be very careful not to neglect for a second the problems with production or the economy, because the blockade seeks to impose the most difficult of economic conditions on Cuba. We must be able to wage the political battle against the enemy that seeks to squelch our independence, while upholding or even improving the production struggle. When we produce, we also strengthen the fatherland.

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Navy Chief Speaks at 'Murdered' Lieutenant's Funeral

PA1508174394 Havana PRENSA LATINA in Spanish 1522 GMT 14 Aug 94

[Text] Havana, 14 Aug (PL)—A high-ranking Cuban Armed Forces officer promised today a heavy hand against those who attack the country's security, referring to the two military men recently murdered by boat hijackers.

During ceremonies to pay tribute to a Navy lieutenant who was shot to death by an assistant who hijacked a boat, Rear Admiral Pedro Perez Betancourt, chief of the Cuban Revolutionary Navy [MGR] forces, said the people would come down on those who try to destabilize the country.

Perez Betancourt talked before thousands of people at Mariel, a port located approximately 40 km west of Havana and where Navy Lieutenant Roberto Aguilar Reyes was killed last week. Aguilar Reyes commanded a civilian boat, rented to the Navy, which was taken to the United States by hijacker Leonel Macias and approximately 20 more people.

The chief of the MGR forces demanded serious negotiations from Washington and that they be based on respect for Cuba's sovereignty. He, however, said that "we will not waste time playing games related to the internal affairs" of the United States.

He believes it would not be an extraordinary move if the murderer is finally tried in the United States but would only be a compliance with legal obligation. "Beating around the bush will not lead to a solution," he added.

Perez Betancourt spoke beside the coffin of the murdered Navy lieutenant, whose body will be buried in a solemn ceremony to be held in his home province, Camaguey, this afternoon. Camaguey is located 596 km east of Havana.

The violent hijacking of three boats in the past two weeks, and their later arrival in the U.S. state of Florida, where their passengers were received in accordance with the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Law, has prompted a new chapter of aggravations in Cuban-U.S. relations, broken more than 30 years ago.

Last Sunday, more than half a million Havana residents attended a ceremony to honor policeman Gabriel Lamoth (19 years old), who was murdered last Friday, 5 August, when he tried to stop the hijacking of a small boat en route to the community of Regla, in Havana.

That day, riots carried out by vandals and criminals took place at the Malecon coastal avenue and left 35 people injured and caused property damage in several stores.

Commentary Urges 'Antisocials' To Reject 'Imperialists'

FL1608124494 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 15 Aug 94

[Commentary by Eduardo Vilas; from the "Doing Radio" program: "Our Opinion"]

[Text] I planned on commenting on another subject today, but recent events in Cuba have encouraged me to research the traditional methods used by the imperialists to destabilize governments they do not like.

I thought I would make great discoveries at first, but realized later that I was reading things that every average, thinking Cuban of a certain age knows well, having lived through and suffered deeply from them over these 35 years of confrontation.

Even though the United States has used every possible method against us, it could not avoid the Revolution's growing international prestige and the fact that the people's support for the Revolution and its leaders was making it stronger.

Cuba was a consolidated state in the 1980s, with great advances in the most sensitive social areas, such as health, social security and education. We also have relative advances in diverse economic sectors, 85 percent related to the social sector. While the years may have been abundant, there was not enough peace and calm to allow Cuba to abandon its defense efforts.

The USSR's fall indeed was a major blow to our economic aspirations, to the people's welfare, and to the country's overall development. However, all of our problems do not stem from socialism's demise or the imperialist blockade. There is a breeding ground for discontent among those who are more attached to material possessions than others, despite the fact that we all, sometimes mercilessly, suffer the blows and shortages of the special period.

The weaker population sectors are more sensitive under these circumstances and are more susceptible to the siren's song that the United States beams to Cuba via 17 radio stations. The outcasts, who are not used to work or who work as little as possible, are the most sensitive. It is not by chance that the anti-Cuban radio stations broadcast programs that target them, programs that are quite coarse but that the producers know appeal to those whose interests go no further than their own appetites and who are capable of anything to satisfy them, including treason, murder, and even endangering the lives of dozens of human beings to accomplish their goals.

These outcasts do not understand that outcasts have traditionally been used by some to destabilize others and that later, when their dirty work is done, they will be restrained and abandoned by those who have used them. They will be considered the useless scum of society.

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There have been many examples since the beginning of time, and our antisocials, for obvious reasons, will not be the exception to the rule.

I say this because the outcasts participated in recent events. I am sure that they will not find what they are looking for but precisely the opposite.

I sincerely suggest: Think, think. You are valued in this society because it is more humane. In the society to which you aspire to belong, you will only be the lowest of the low and will be treated as such.

Pedro Ross Praises Workers for 'Neutralizing Antisocials'

FL1608222494 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1932 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Pedro Ross, member of the Politburo and secretary general of the Cuban Workers Federation, has affirmed that Cuban workers will tackle economic efficiency with the same firmness that they recently displayed in neutralizing antisocials in Havana. Ross chaired a plenum of labor leaders in Ciego de Avila which analyzed workers' contributions to social security, the income tax law, labor and salary issues, and plans for September and October.

Ross pointed out that the workers will struggle to meet the people's food production goals with the same resolve they showed against the antisocials. He also instructed labor leaders to prepare methodically for the forthcoming round of economic efficiency assemblies.

Journalists Denounce U.S. 'Conspiracy' To Upset Economy

FL1608230394

[Editorial Report] Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish at 1600 GMT on 16 August carries a 15-minute edition of its regularly scheduled "Straight Talk" program, with host Osvaldo Rodriguez from BOHEMIA magazine and guests Luis Sexto, also from BOHEMIA magazine, and Fernando Davalos, on "Cuba's Current Situation."

Rodriguez opens the debate by stating that the Maltese tanker incident ended successfully on 15 August. He recalls the prior hijacking incidents that took the lives of Navy Lieutenant Aguilar in Mariel, and police Sergeant Lamoth in Havana Bay. He states: "These incidents are stall tactics to divert Cubans from their main goal of overcoming the economic crisis."

Sexto states: "Cuba has a more important battle to fight than these skirmishes [escaramuzas] of recent weeks, skirmishes that are neither casual nor spontaneous." He goes on to say: "I am convinced there is a conspiracy behind it, staged by the U.S. Secret Service, with the aid of local agents, the so-called fifth column. I believe our enemy, the United States to be blunt, believes this to be an ideal, critical moment to bring to a close the strategy they have been implementing against Cuba for 35 years. Clearly, the United States believes the circumstances are ripe."

Sexto adds that the United States is "convinced that the Cuban strategy—designed by the revolutionary Government and the Party to overcome this critical moment in the economy—is going to be successful in the short or medium term," including the enemy's efforts to precipitate the events they have dreamed of for 35 years.

Davalos states that this "plot" aims to "upset the national economy."

Rodriguez agrees with the use of the word skirmishes to describe these incidents that have taken human lives and ships and disturbed the peace in Havana because despite the "spectacular nature" of the events, "Havana's economic life was not paralyzed." He adds that everything returned to normalcy quickly and reiterates that those participating in the skirmishes are "trying to divert attention from the real issues."

Sexto goes on to stress the importance of stopping such antisocial outbursts. Davalos points out that this happens, coincidentally, "as Cuba is showing signs of recovery." Davalos adds that Cuban oil extraction, tourism, and nickel are in a "veritable recovery." Sexto reiterates that the enemy is "convinced" that the Cuban economic crisis will be overcome. Sexto points out that a U.S. publication reported two months ago that Cuba is among the safest places in the world for foreign investment, and adds: "It is not a coincidence that these events are taking place now and are aimed at eroding Cuba's normalcy and stability—our essential advantages."

Davalos stresses the importance of tackling economic recovery with determination, and overcoming bureaucracy, passivity, and other subjective obstacles. In this regard, Rodriguez closes by commenting that "this is surely not a skirmish, but a long, hard battle."

Dominican Opposition Chief Bars Party From Inauguration

FL1608121594 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1104 GMT 16 Aug 94

[From the "First Thing" program]

[Text] Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, Dominican social democratic leader, last night forbid his party's elected congresssmen to attend President Joaquin Balaguer's inauguration today. Pena Gomez accused Balaguer of violating the Pact for Democracy, signed by the two leaders following Constituent Assembly approval of the Dominican president's new term being shortened from four years to two years rather than 18 months, as it was agreed.

Dominican Republic To Facilitate Transit of Haitians

FL1708122294 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 17 Aug 94

[From the "First Thing" program]

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[Text] The Dominican Republic will facilitate the transit of 2,000 Haitians authorized to immigrate, at the request of the United States. Dominican Deputy Foreign Minister Favio Herrera Cabral has said that his country will authorize the transit of the 2,000 Haitians, who will travel to the United States under the Clinton administration's protection. He added that the Haitians will wait for a flight to take them to the United States. The Dominican Republic agreed to the U.S. request because the military regime in Port-au-Prince denied U.S. aircraft authorization to land in Haiti.

Namibian Prime Minister Invited To Visit

FL1708022094 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Aug 94

[Text] The prime minister of the Republic of Namibia will soon visit Cuba in response to an official invitation by the Cuban Government. The 53-year-old official has been prime minister since 1990 when Namibia gained its independence.

Yadira Garcia Chairs Military Discharge Ceremony

FL1608223394 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1947 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Yadira Garcia, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in Matanzas, has chaired a ceremony in Cardenas marking the discharge of approximately 2,000 Central Army soldiers following a two-year enlistment term. Over 500 youths participated in the ceremony, representing all soldiers discharged from active duty. Certificates and awards were presented to Youth Labor Army, Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces [FAR], and Interior Ministry soldiers, all of whom have enrollment at universities and military prep schools guaranteed.

FAR Minister Raul Castro has described the Central Army as the most stable command in military training and competence to defend the region.

Eastern Army Pledges Commitment to FAR Minister

FL1708021694 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Report by Holguin correspondent Arnaldo Vargas Castro; from the "Exclusive" program]

[Text] Eastern Army generals, chiefs, and leaders who participated in an assessment meeting of [passage indistinct] the training year program have ratified, on behalf of every soldier, the irrevocable decision to defend the region at any cost. This commitment was expressed in a letter to Army General Raul Castro, minister of the Revolutionary Armed Forces. The letter also contains their rejection of the recent destabilization events encouraged by the enemy.

Brigadier General Urbelino Betancourt, deputy chief of the Eastern Army, stated that the command fulfilled its defense training plan for the first half of 1994 with quality and fewer expenses, and has improved combat and tactical training efforts, theater-of-operations preparations, and food production endeavors.

The pledge expressed to Raul Castro is also supported by the high level of training of the regular troops, the reserves, and the Territorial Troops Militia as evidenced by tests taken by over 15,000 soldiers and satisfactory-rated tactical maneuvers and exercises.

The letter's closing statement is categorical:

Dear Minister: The great Eastern Army will not fail you!

Weather Satellite Accord Signed With UN

FL1708022994 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Aug 94

[From the "NTV" newscast]

[Text] Cuba will soon have improved capabilities to predict floods and other weather phenomena following today's signing of a cooperation accord by Guido Ordonez, representative of the UN Development Program, and Raul Taladrid, Cuban vice minister for foreign investment and economic cooperation.

Thus begins an important project—worth $250,000—which will enable Cuba to develop technology to predict coastal floods and destructive weather patterns. This was stated by Weather Institute director Fabio Fajardo.

[Begin recording] I think that at this very moment of the signing of the accord, we should begin to work. This project has three phases, which will take a couple of years to complete. [end recording]

Once the project is completed, Cuba will be linked to a satellite weather information network, as well as have access to other equipment and technology. The project will also improve Civil Defense information and reference center capabilities and will help provide more timely warnings to the population in case of emergencies.

Electricity Service Director Explains New Rate System

FL1608170594 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 13 Aug 94

[Report by Mariela Diaz; from the "Doing Radio" program]

[Text] The electricity rate system that will go into effect in October aims to decrease residential power consumption, to facilitate collection of excess circulating currency, and to restore national finances. Residential consumption has increased nine percent, despite scheduled power outages.

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Electricity Services Director Ricardo Gonzalez says that although the new rates will not mean an end to power outages altogether, it will probably mean the outages will be less frequent:

[Begin Gonzalez recording] With the new rates, we hope to reduce consumption and, perhaps, the number of power outages. We are working in two directions to reduce the number of outages:

We are working to repair our electrical plants, as the minister explained in a recent interview. An extensive program has been devised to restore our electrical plants' production capacities. We are working hard toward this goal and are already seeing results. Electricity production has increased in recent months, but there is still much to do to return to previous electricity production capacities. Electricity supplies also depend on Cuba's ability to buy fuel. We cannot guarantee that power outages will disappear altogether as we only have a limited amount of fuel.

Conserving energy is another way to reduce the number of power outages. While our electricity supplies depend on the condition of power plants and on the fuel supplies, cutting back will help electricity supplies go a lot farther. [end recording]

The new electricity rate system is based on the current price of nine cents per kilowatt for the first 100 kilowatt hours of monthly consumption, with charges of 20 cents per kilowatt between 101 kilowatts and 300 kilowatts and 30 cents per kilowatt over 300 kilowatts. These new rates will apply to residential service, multifamily buildings, and those who are self-employed.

Sports Official Decries U.S. Denial of Visas

PA1608222394 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2103 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Havana, 16 Aug (EFE)—Cuba's AGENCIA DE INFORMACION NACIONAL (AIN) today reported that U.S. authorities have denied entry visas to three Cuban coaches and two swimmers who were scheduled to attend an international conference in Texas.

The Cuban delegation comprised 10 athletes and three technicians. Visas were denied to coaches Jose Vasquez, Gilbert Valdes, and Luis Mojarieta, as well as to swimmers Daymara Munoz and Odaisis Delgado.

This "new arbitrary action" of the U.S. Government was reported in a letter to Mustafa Larfaoui, president of the International Swimming Federation, by Guillermo Benitez, president of the Cuban Swimming Federation, the note adds.

In his letter, Benitez described this position as "a new aggression against Cuban sports," and he added that the U.S. authorities are "not abiding by international obligations that every host must undertake when organizing a competition."

Last week, two Cubans were kept from participating in the beach volleyball tournament in Puerto Rico because the U.S. Government refused them a visa.

At that time, the Cuban Volleyball Federation sent a protest note to Ruben Acosta, a Mexican who is president of the International Volleyball Federation, expressing its disagreement with the U.S. mechanisms "that are constantly interfering with the participation of Cuban athletes in sports events because they are denied visas."

Roundup of Economic Developments

FL1208112794

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on economic developments monitored through 16 August.

Camaguey Province produced over 45,600 quintales of tubers, grains, fruits, and vegetables under its school self-sufficiency program during the first six months of the year, more than it produced during the same period last year. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1941 GMT 1 Aug 94)

Granma Province has built 1,360 homes in the first six months of this year. In 1993, the province only received 14 percent of the total amount of cement and steel that was received in 1989. A new construction technique has been developed, in which only 50 percent cement and very little steel is needed. (Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 2 Aug 94)

The Ramon Martel Medina corn mill, in Cardenas, Matanzas, the only one of its kind in Cuba, exceeded its production goal for the first seven months of the year by 50 percent and produced more than 2,800 tonnes of flour and derivatives. (Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 2 Aug 94 94)

Villa Clara Province Bicycle Factory Figures—The Heriberto Mederos bicycle factory, in Caibarien Municipality, Villa Clara Province, has ended July with over 15,000 bicycles built. This is the largest amount of bicycles ever built by this factory in a six- month period. However, the factory's goal was 21,000 bicycles for the first six months of this year. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1941 GMT 3 Aug 94)

The French Government has donated medicine to the Frank Pais Orthopedic Hospital, in Havana City. The donation, valued at over $1 million, was given to the hospital by French Ambassador to Cuba Jan Raphael Dufour. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 2300 GMT 4 Aug 94)

In Pedro Betancourt Municipality, Matanzas Province, the five agricultural-livestock cooperatives dedicated to sugarcane harvesting have obtained positive results in the past sugarcane harvest. The five cooperatives obtained over one million pesos in benefits. In the five cooperatives, there are a total of 316 workers and each one received an average of 1,567 pesos worth of goods.

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The most outstanding of the five cooperatives were the Hermanos Almeida and Revolucion de Octubre, with 97,000 arrobas and 75,000 arrobas of sugarcane per caballeria respectively. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1938 GMT 8 Aug 94)

GRANMA reports that the Cubanacan Cooperation, SA, has invoiced $130 million in the first six months of 1994. This represents five percent more than the amount estimated for this period and is a 38 percent increase compared to the same period in 1993. The number of tourists visiting Cuba from Canada, Germany, and Spain has increased by 50 percent. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1957 GMT 8 Aug 94)

The Agriculture Ministry leads the nation in developing fish farming by constructing ponds, breeding young fish, and stocking the ponds. The Interior Ministry leads the nation in total captures, with over 913 tonnes of fish. The provinces of Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Avila, and Pinar del Rio report the best results in fish farming. In contrast, Havana Province is behind in its freshwater fish farming production. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 10 Aug 94)

Santiago de Cuba Province has set a planting goal of 820 caballerias of sugarcane, the most ambitious goal in the last few years. The tasks will be based on the results obtained by the 86 Basic Cooperative Production Units in the province. The spring planting goal was reached, with 480 caballerias of sugarcane planted. (Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 12 Aug 94)

Oil workers in Ciego de Avila Province have extracted more than 67,000 tonnes of oil. Workers hope to exceed their goal for 1994. (Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Aug 94)

National Association of Small Farmers milk producers have increased production 34 percent over last year. (Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Aug 94) A total of 33 Basic Cooperative Production Units (UBPC) harvest coffee in Guantanamo Province. It is estimated that the harvest will yield just over 2 million cans of coffee. (Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1155 GMT 16 Aug 94)

By September 1994, Cuban metal workers will produce the first 120 urban buses built entirely in Cuba. To solve the transportation problem, a goal of 200 buses has been set for the year. These buses are not high quality—due to the "special period"—and are built with spare parts from the Hungarian Icarus buses that were assembled in Cuba in the past and with other recycled components. (Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 16 Aug 94)

The sugarcane sowing rate in Matanzas Province has reportedly been good. A total of 221 caballerias was planted in July, as part of the winter planting campaign. This is a major improvement over the 87 caballerias of sugarcane planted during the same period last year. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1402 GMT 16 Aug 94)

Ciego de Avila Province produced 33,905,000 eggs during the first six months of 1994, meeting the province's egg production goal 120 percent. Martires del Moncada farm is the leading egg producer not only in the province but also in Cuba. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1408 GMT 16 Aug 94)

Over 800 caballerias of rice have been planted at the Sur del Jibaro farming complex, in La Sierpe Municipality, Sancti Spiritus Province, as part of the spring planting campaign. The complex hopes to harvest 1.4 million quintales of rice this year. The UBPCs just south of this complex have already collected over 250,000 quintales of rice, most with Cuban-built combines. (Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1410 GMT 16 Aug 94)

Dominican Republic

Balaguer Takes Office, Mentions 'Foreign Meddling'

PA1608214494 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1648 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Santo Domingo, 16 Aug (EFE)—President Joaquin Balaguer, reelected in May's irregular elections, took office today for a reduced two-year term before the National Assembly and amid the absence of representatives of the main opposition party.

In a speech marked by frequent religious quotes, indirect references to international criticism against his government, and an alleged plan to unite the Dominican Republic with Haiti, Balaguer was widely applauded by National Assembly members, who asked that he stay on for four years, and jeered at the mention of opposition leader Jose Francisco Pena Gomez.

Balaguer was declared elected for a four-year term even though he reduced the term to 18 months after negotiating with the main opposition party. Afterward, and following a review of the draft bill he sent to the National Assembly, his deputies and other allied parties increased the term to two years.

This reason is why representatives of Pena Gomez' Dominican Revolutionary Party [PRD] were absent from the National Assembly. The PRD had demanded that Balaguer promise to summon a new Constituent Assembly before delivering his speech to remodify this point in the Constitution.

No other heads of state, presidents, ministers, or representatives from other governments were present, but the diplomatic corps accredited in Santo Domingo did attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Balaguer, accompanied by Vice President-elect Jacinto Peynado, briefly mentioned the "electoral crisis" and the

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"nationalist movement," which appeared in the country recently and which is due, he said, "to foreign meddling in Dominican domestic affairs."

Ever since the 16 May elections, in which political observers detected irregularities, the Dominican Government has been the target of international criticism, especially by the United States.

Balaguer, without directly mentioning it, referred to his government's thesis that foreign powers are trying to unite the Dominican Republic and Haiti and use as an example the debt cancellation contract signed with foreign banks.

Balaguer said this contract establishes the debt cancellation will be executed in all its terms, "even if the Dominican Republic unites with another country."

Those assembly members present, most of whom belonged to the ruling Social Christian Reformist Party, then shouted "would rather be dead" (than be joined to Haiti), even though Balaguer immediately reminded them the text of the contract had been reviewed by the previous assembly and no observations had been made.

Balaguer asked what is happening in today's world with the Dominican Republic. He cited as events fit for reflection the fact that Canada and the United Kingdom had withdrawn their diplomatic and consular missions to Santo Domingo; thus, when people want a visa for these countries they must travel to Haiti's capital, Port-au-Prince.

The main thrust of Balaguer's speech listed the public works he intends to build during the legislative period. The public works include a dam, several irrigation canals, and a project of airport expansion.

Before the speech, Assembly President Amable Aristi, a member of the ruling party, referred to Balaguer and said "divine providence offers us this captain (...) God has chosen him to again be our guide," and he compared his personality to "the selfishness that characterizes other leaderships."

Coinciding with Balaguer's swearing-in, a letter from the U.S. ambassador was made public. The letter had been sent to the president of the Electoral Central Board stating past elections have not obtained popular legitimacy.

Haiti

UN Mediator's Visit Denied; Venezuela Plans Meeting

PA1708040894 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0230 GMT 17 Aug 94a

[Excerpts] Port-au-Prince, 16 Aug (NOTIMEX)—Diplomat Leandro Despouy today denied reports saying that Dante Caputo, UN and OAS mediator in the Haitian crisis, will be traveling to Haiti.

In a statement to Radio Metropole, Despouy, Caputo's political adviser, today said, "no decision has yet been made" with regard to a mission headed by Caputo to deliver one last message to the military leaders who overthrew constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, a Venezuelan diplomat is currently in Haiti preparing for a possible visit by Latin American foreign ministers opposed to military intervention, local sources reported.

UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali had criticized the "goodwill mission" proposed by Venezuela shortly after the approval of UN Security Council Resolution 940.

In the words of one Aristide supporter: "The confusion and crossed messages among members of the international community are merely assisting the military leaders by encouraging additional procrastination. Repression is mounting, and opportunities for freedom of expression continue to be reduced." [passage omitted]

There is considerably less traffic in the main streets of the capital, while more pedestrians can be seen. Many of the stores that are still open are considering the possibility of reducing their business hours.

Meanwhile, the Coordinating Board of Grass-Roots Churches [Corodinacion de Iglesias de Base] commented on a document issued by the Episcopal Conference in a statement that said: "In light of the calamities affecting Haitians, the Catholic Church hierarchy has chosen to abandon the people, sending confusing messages." In their latest message, Haitian ecclesiastical authorities failed to condemn human rights violations being committed by the military government.

Pentagon, State Department Cited on Refugee Incidents

FL1608184694 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] The Pentagon reported on 15 August that 45 Haitians and 20 U.S. military personnel were injured on 13 August during incidents involving Haitian refugees at the U.S. base at Guantanamo, Cuba. It took four hours to restore order, after minor injuries were caused by the rocks and assorted objects that were being hurled. Doug Kennett, Pentagon spokesman, said that two bruised U.S. Military Police officers remained hospitalized on 15 August.

The protest began on the morning of 14 August, when refugees began demonstrating and chanting political slogans. AFP, citing an anonymous Pentagon source, reported that 120 Haitians plunged into the water shortly thereafter to swim to the other shore of the U.S. base. They apparently thought they were heading for Cuban territory. The Pentagon noted in a communique that other refugees then began throwing stones, cans, and

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various objects at the U.S. Military Police. A total of 750 Haitians were allegedly involved in those incidents. Kennett reported that 320 of the Haitians were taken to an isolated area to calm the situation.

In another development, the State Department has reported that Port-au-Prince has refused to allow the airborne evacuation of 794 Haitians who have been granted political asylum in the United States. AFP, citing Michael McCurry, State Department spokesman, reported that the United States is looking for other solutions to allow the departure by land or by sea of those prospective exiles who applied on Haitian territory for political asylum. Haiti, hit by international sanctions aimed at forcing the military to leave power, has not been served by any air links since 1 August.

McCurry stated that, as in so many other areas, the de facto regime has proved absolutely inflexible and has not granted landing rights to planes to recover the refugees. He added: We are obviously making every possible effort to have those refugees come to the United States as soon as possible.

Washington decided on 5 July to grant political asylum only to those Haitians who apply for asylum in their own country. The Haitian boat people must now choose between taking temporary refuge at the U.S. base at Guantanamo, Cuba, or returning to Haiti.

Priests Protest Armed Civilians at Cathedral

FL1608193094 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Celebrating the feast of Our Lady of the Assumption, a mass was held in the cathedral under heavy security. The Army commander in chief, his spouse, members of the General Staff of the military institution, and some ministers of the provisional government attended the ceremony.

A small incident on this occasion involved refusal by priests of the Port-au-Prince archdiocese to participate in the eucharistic ceremony, in protest of the many armed civilians surrounding the Port-au-Prince cathedral.

The feast of Our Lady of the Assumption was preceded this year by three days of prayer, a marian tridium, which had been called for by the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. The Protestants had also convened their believers to observe three days of meditation and prayer on 12, 13, and 14 August.

Civilians Appear 'Tired' During Army Training

FL1608185594 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Training for members of the national resistance continued on 15 August, with several thousand marching past the National Palace, Army Headquarters, and the office of the metropolitan police. The march, supervised by Army officers, started in the Champs-de-Mars area and wound its way through Port-au-Prince streets. Others from the metropolitan area joined the Army volunteers. Some civilians looked tired and weak during training on 15 August, with one person reportedly succumbing during the exercises.

Consumers Face 'Breathtaking' Price Increases

FL1608221094 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1600 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Excerpts] It is the infernal musical chairs of essential-product prices in the local market. Nothing can be bought anymore, say many Haitian consumers who from now on must face the breathtaking rise in the price of all products: fuel, essential products, food, public transport, an extremely critical situation. Guilloto Francois collected statements on the public markets' and supermarkets' high cost of living:

[Begin Francois recording, in Creole] The prices of essential products have risen greatly in Haiti. In the public markets and supermarkets, the prices have tended to double, if not triple. According to statistics from the Haitian Bureau of Statistics, the costs of essential products have risen 30 percent. The statistical research goes back a month. Sugar, flour, and oil have tripled on the Haitian market. These are imported products, the costs of which are influenced by the U.S. dollar. The price of local products such as ground corn has also tended to increase.

Experts believe that with the price of fuel increasing, other products on the local market will also increase. How are people reacting to the increase in prices of products? [passage omitted]

The prices have increased more in the supermarkets than they have in the public markets. In addition, customers think that products must be regularly verified in the supermarkets: high prices and bad hygienic conditions command the attention of customers. [passage omitted]

Experts give three reasons why the prices of products have increased in Haiti: First, the experts state that consumers put too much pressure on asking for more.

The second reason is that the value of the U.S. dollar is increasing compared with the gourde, which is under too much pressure. The third reason for the increase in prices is the cost of transport for local products to the capital. One of the means of solving this problem is a social pact among the state, businessmen, etc., because according to experts, Haiti is facing a particularly difficult situation. [end recording]

Report on ABC Interview With Cedras

PA1608181294 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 16 Aug 94 p 14

[Report on "exclusive" interview with General Raoul Cedras by Juan Carlos Azcue, of the Spanish newspaper ABC, in Port-au-Prince; date not given]

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[Text] While thousands of poorly dressed and even more poorly armed Haitians "train" on Port-au-Prince streets, General Raoul Cedras grants ABC an exclusive interview during which he reiterates that he will not step down before his mandate expires. After recalling his stay at the military academy in the Spanish city of Toledo—whose bell, "made with Haitian bronze" as he says, he remembers—Cedras accuses the United Nations and the international community in general of using a double standard to assess his policy and blames the media and foreign embassies for "campaigning against Haiti."

Cedras, Haiti's strongman, receives ABC in his Armed Forces office in Port-au-Prince. A submachine gun rests under his desk, while outside can be heard the armed volunteers who march under his balcony shouting: "We are willing to die for Haiti." They train every day under the watchful eye of four hooded men of undisclosed nationality.

Cedras, 45, attended a course at the Toledo military academy in 1975. He remembers those days with nostalgia and asks with curiosity what Franco represents these days. The general flatly tells ABC that he is not willing to go to Spain or any other country, including the Dominican Republic, because he will not accept the United Nations' demand that he march into exile.

He sounds firm and sure of himself. There is no reason for him, other Armed Forces officers, or civilian collaborators to be purged.

Cedras accuses Argentine Dante Caputo, the UN representative, of manipulating the Governor's Island Agreement. He accuses the international community of mocking Haiti, for instance, by offering only $35,000 for the reorganization of its 7,000-man Army.

Cedras says: "You people established an economic embargo against us Haitians. How do you expect us to react? We are no fools."

His position on President-in-Exile Jean Bertrand Aristide is adamant. "Aristide never proposed an amnesty for the military and civilians to the Haitian Parliament. All he wants is to take revenge for the 1991 military intervention and reinstall a demagogical government," the general says, gradually raising the tone of his voice.

"Aristide's followers, the avalanche, have been provoking and dividing Haitian society with victims. This cannot be permitted to recur. Aristide cannot return to Haiti. The possibility of negotiations in that sense is a thing of the past," he says.

Cedras says he agrees to retire in January, according to Haitian military regulations, and not before, as the United Nations and the United States demand. "They cannot legally force me to retire."

Cedras complains that there are two different standards for measuring nations. "For example, in Algeria there was a military coup that went uncondemned; no one decreed an embargo. Also recently there was one in the African nation of Gambia. Why against the Haitians?" The general says he is not scared of an invasion by an international force that would be composed mainly of U.S. nationals. "They will have to kill lots of people. We will also make it hard for them, just like when they occupied our nation for 19 years at the beginning of the century."

He does not liken his situation to that of Panamanian Gen. Noriega, who is in a U.S. jail.

He reiterates that he will call general elections in Haiti on 7 December and that "anyone can win, even an Aristide sympathizer." But the latter individual cannot be a candidate because the Constitution does not allow a person to be a candidate twice.

Gen. Cedras labels the current international embargo against Haitians as criminal, because even though medicine and food are not officially included in this embargo, in fact these items are affected.

In addition, he rejects the notion that human rights are being violated and accuses the few embassies that are still open and the international press of orchestrating a campaign against Haiti. "Some people who have died of natural causes have been found on the streets, apparently on their way from the hospital. Some have been shot, so it seems like they died violently, as there was fresh blood at the scene." The general continued: "During the military intervention in 1991, 20 soldiers and 60 civilians died. The number of thousands of deaths have thus been an exaggeration by the international community and the press. [no closing quotation mark as published]

They want to make common crime out to be political, even if a husband batters his wife," he explains sarcastically. [no opening quotation mark as published]

Cedras denies outright that the Argentine Embassy in Port-au-Prince recently closed it doors because it had received death threats. "If they leave it is because they want to; we Haitians do not close down any embassy."

He recalls with affection his stay in Toledo, explaining that as he looked at the cathedral bell he remembered that the Spanish had obtained the bronze from Haiti. After that realization, he made an anticolonial speech.

Gen. Raoul Cedras accuses President Aristide of selling himself off to U.S. interests and says the Washington Administration has a bias against Haiti. He smiles maliciously when he is asked what possible foreign interest there could be in the poorest nation in the Americas and indicates that maybe someone knows something secret.

Two hours with Cedras gives one the impression that Haiti's strongman is trying to gain time to avoid an armed invasion, thinking that maybe the Cuban situation will take more priority in the United States. He is trying to achieve this much like the Serbs in Bosnia have done.

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Media Banned From Broadcasting Embassy Statements

FL1608202794 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1045 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Let us begin with news of what most concerns journalists, and the Haitian press in general—this new turn of the screw on the Haitian media. In fact, the noose seems to be further tightening on the press, with a new communique from the provisional government restricting the work of journalists and the media. The government issued a communique on 12 August, through the Ministry of Information, in which it formally prohibits the local press from broadcasting information or statements from foreign embassies or the Haitian press service without express authorization. In this 12 August communique, the provisional government also asks media owners and directors, and I quote: to avoid thoughtlessly and rashly broadcasting any news likely to create an atmosphere of panic or confusion in the country, unquote.

In announcing this ban, the government referred to a 31 July decree instituting a state of siege on Haitian territory. It is the fourth communique of this kind addressed to the Haitian press since the institution of the state of siege in July.

Missing Radio Tropic Journalist Said 'Underground'

FL1608213294 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1030 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Haitian journalist Ernst Ocean, our Tropic FM colleague who was reported missing as of 31 July, is underground, his parents told the press over the weekend. Ocean, Saint-Marc correspondent for Radio Tropic FM, a private radio station in the capital, had been reported missing 48 hours after he covered a progovernment demonstration, which has given rise to worry among his family and colleagues.

Police authorities in the city of Saint-Marc said they have not detained the journalist, who had been imprisoned in the past by the local authorities and charged with distribution of leaflets supporting President-in-Exile Jean-Bertrand Aristide, before being released at the decision of Justice.

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Warship Fires on U.S. Fishing Vessel: No Injuries

PA1708135094 Mexico City XEW Television Network in Spanish 0430 GMT 17 Aug 94

[From the "24 Hours" newscast]

[Text] A Mexican warship fired on a U.S. flagged vessel that was fishing shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico; no one was wounded. The U.S. Coast Guard ordered the vessel to return to Port Isabel in Texas.

Charge Offers To Mediate in Caracas Embassy Occupation

PA1708040094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0315 GMT 17 Aug 94

[Text] Mexico City, 16 Aug (EFE)—The Mexican Embassy in Caracas will contribute in "facilitating the communication" between the Venezuelan Government and the 36 individuals who occupied the diplomatic mission today, 16 August, the Mexican Foreign Ministry announced.

The Mexican Foreign Relations Secretariat announced in an official communique a group of 36 individuals peacefully showed up at the Mexican Embassy in Caracas to make a series of demands.

The document stated that Juan Manuel Nungaray, the Mexican charge d'affaires in Venezuela, after listening to the peasants, "determined the group's demands do not involve the embassy" and that, therefore, he decided to make himself available as mediator to the Venezuelan authorities.

The secretariat stated the local authorities immediately went to the Mexican Embassy to talk to the occupiers of the diplomatic mission who, according to reports, are behaving peacefully.

A spokesman for the Mexican Foreign Relations Secretariat said the dialogue continued at the diplomatic mission up until the moment the official communique was announced.

Zedillo Interview on Economic Plans

PA1708034194 Mexico City EL FINANCIERO in Spanish 12 Aug 94 pp 34,35

[Report on interview with Ernesto Zedillo, PRI presidential candidate, by Oscar Hinojosa, Jesus Sanchez, and Gustavo Lomelin; places, date not given: "The New Federalism and the Strengthening of Other State Institutions"]

[Text] Without any doubt, Ernesto Zedillo believes that any changes that would require the president of the republic to submit the appointment of his ministers to confirmation hearings is "totally unsubstantiated" because "in the end, the sole responsibility for this lies with the president, since we live under a presidential system."

On the other hand, the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] candidate points out that limits on presidential powers will be established—if he wins the 21 August elections—by strengthening the legislative branch, especially in comptroller-style duties, and through a new federalism.

It has been a long trip (Mexico City-Mazatlan-Tijuana) and a brief interview. The PRI presidential candidate granted this newspaper's reporters 45 minutes of his time. The interview is being monitored by Carlos Salomon Camara [PRI secretary of information and propaganda] and as well as by [Social Communications Director] Jorge Medina Viedas, both travelling to Tijuana for this purpose. Exactly 40 minutes [figure as published]. Zedillo takes just a few brief questions before bidding the reporters farewell.

This is an interview timed by a stopwatch. Salomon gives each reporter a note that says the interview will end in five minutes. One of the three reporters present complains to Salomon that "you are cramping our creativity." Considering that this was such a long trip, many questions remained unanswered.

It has been a long trip, but most of all a demanding one, especially for the thousands of PRI supporters who showed up at Zedillo's political rally in Estero del Infiernillo, Mazatlan. The candidate arrives almost 30 minutes late in Mazatlan. No wonder the rally's organizers were concerned, since most of the men and women at Estero del Infiernillo had been arriving—some from as far away as Baja California Sur—since 0300 hours. In addition, the noon sun in Mazatlan is a real agony, a real hell in the marshes.

I have a stone in my shoe, Zedillo says on board the campaign bus and proceeds to take his shoe off in front of Sinaloa State's PRI leaders. His wife, Nilda Patricia, just looks on.

I hope it is not the PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution]. Right? Rafael Oceguera Ramos, secretary general of the National Movement of the Revolutionary Youth [MNJR] inaccuratedly asks.

No way, Zedillo stresses, as this newspaper's reporters begin to board the bus.

In Tijuana, a pair of scrutinizing eyes appear around a partially open door when the reporters arrive: Zedillo's strong inquisitive stare.

[EL FINANCIERO] How can there be any assurances that a new development model that redistributes income, works against poverty, and promotes unemployment will work?

[Zedillo] Experiences in other nations, especially in Southeast Asia, shows that when those nations opened

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up and gave priority status to a model favoring exports, income distribution improved substantially. Countries that had very high incomes during the early 1960's and later undertook growth strategies based on international trade are now attaining remarkably balanced distributions of income. What is happening is that during the past few years our country has restructured its economy and established foundations for a new phase of development. It is only now that we are planning to implement a model which, in my opinion, should produce a better distribution of income. On the other hand, this millionaires issue is no yardstick for measuring distribution of income. Income is measured either through functional distribution or household income distribution. The only accepted measures are those used by ECLA [Economic Commission for Latin America] and INEGI [National Institute of Geography, Statistics, and Data Processing]. These measures do identify a relative improvement in distribution of income, although these are still very modest and insignificant.

Evidently, one of the realities of both the import substitution model and the high inflation rate of the 1970's and 1980's is that income is still highly concentrated. But I am sure that we will gradually improve the functional and family distribution of income by striving for stability, industrialization based on competitiveness, and opening.

[EL FINANCIERO] What is your main pledge to our multimillionaires?

[Zedillo] I have made no pledge to multimillionaires. My only commitment is to the party, working to win this election, and, once I have been elected by the majority, working for the majority of the Mexican people.

[EL FINANCIERO] How do you plan to ensure that the transfer of power will take place in an economically peaceful climate, considering that we have experienced financial difficulties and that there is restlessness and nervousness in financial markets?

[Zedillo] I think we already have walked a considerable portion of the most difficult stretch. Since 1 January, the country has been sorely tested by violence and political uncertainty. The best evidence that the foundations erected in the past few years are very sound is that, despite the serious events we have faced, the country's financial system and economic situation have withstood these onslaughts. I believe these circumstances will vanish after 21 August, when it will be seen clearly that the country is in a position to receive investments from Mexicans and foreigners alike. Mexico's enormous potential for growth will be evident. It is very satisfying that, a few days before the elections, we are saying that the financial system has experienced an onslaught of speculation but that things did not get worse; that interest rates are dropping a few days prior to the elections but that the stock market has recovered to a certain extent; that foreign investors show greater and greater confidence; and that local investors' fears have been allayed to a certain extent.

[EL FINANCIERO] The economy has slowed down since last year. Hard economic times prevailed, not only since 1 January of this year, but last year too. Some people think the development model has already been exhausted and that adjustments would be required to fit it into greater social development and political opening.

[Zedillo] In fact, the slowdown started as far back as late 1992. A certain slowdown associated with several events began in the first quarter of 1992. First, it seems that there had been some kind of plan for this, because one last-ditch anti-inflation effort was made in 1993. Then came the stagnation of the international economy. These two factors aggravated the situation with the uncertainty introduced by the ratification of NAFTA. This led to a an economic slowdown until the process reached a very low point late in 1993. The violence and uncertainty took place at a time when we thought the economy would recover. All this has extended this economic slow growth period.

We completed the phase of structural adjustment and stabilization. As soon as this political uncertainty is dissipated we will be ready to start a phase of deliberate promotion of economic growth. I am convinced that we have solid bases and that we can move on to a development policy that will differ from the one implemented in the past five years, because we will have different and new instruments not available six years ago.

[EL FINANCIERO] Big business had never been as militant for your cause as it is now. Statements as polemical as those of Roberto Hernandez are uncommon. Could this be viewed by certain quarters as the kiss of the devil for the PRI candidate?

[Zedillo] As coordinator of Luis Donaldo's campaign—I advised him to do this and that is just what I did during my own campaign—I decided that we should hold an open, honest, and frank campaign, not one behind the scenes, but an open campaign among the country's businessmen. I also decided that we should carry out a very special campaign with mini, small, and medium businessmen. For the first time in our party's history we organized forums for discussion to establish contacts with and to seek the support of the country's businessmen. We created the so-called managerial cells, which are not groups of big businessmen, but of small and medium businessmen. We created party finance committees that are mostly headed by businessmen. Big businessmen have shown their support. But we also value the support of mini, small, and medium businessmen. I am convinced that the business sector in our country must play a decisive role in achieving national goals. Private businessmen are the ones called on to create most of the jobs. I think that we must implement a policy of respect, encouragement, recognition, and support for businessmen, because they are mainly responsible for the creation of jobs.

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[EL FINANCIERO] Does the suport of the big businessmen, aside from the support of mini and small businessmen, not commit the PRI candidate?

[Zedillo] I am committed to creating jobs. To achieve this I need the support of mini, small, and big businessmen, because they are responsible for creating jobs.

[EL FINANCIERO] In addition to shedding unwritten powers, how could the president's power be reduced or restrained? For instance, some people have mentioned the possibility of the president of the republic consulting with Congress on the appointment of his associates.

[Zedillo] That is completely irrelevant because, according to the Constitution, all the responsibility rests with the president of the republic, the head of the federal executive. We live under a presidential system. I think the president's power can be limited in two ways. First, by strengthening the legislative branch, particularly its comptroller-type functions over the executive, and strengthening the judicial branch, in this particular instance taking into consideration its constitutional right to control actions by authorities, including those of the federal executive. Second, by creating a federal system in which the president sheds not only implied or unwritten powers, but also written powers whereby part of the federal government's present decisionmaking power, which by definition is controlled by the president of the republic, can be transferred to state and municipal governments, just as we did in the federalization of education, by stripping the federal government of a substantial portion of its budget. The present budget of 26 or 27 billion new pesos, which the federal government previously controlled is now controlled by state governments. If this policy is applied to many other areas, it will result in a much smaller federal government and much larger state and municipal governments with greater decisionmaking power but greater responsibility.

[EL FINANCIERO] In this effort to strengthen the legislative branch in its comptroller-type functions, for instance, would the Comptroller General's Office's existing authority be transferred to the Chamber of Deputies accounting commission?

[Zedillo] I think these are two different things. The executive branch must have a comptroller's office to make sure its subordinates are obeying the law. The executive branch requires an instrument to make sure the law, and the executive branch's decrees too, are being heeded by the government apparatus that answers to the executive branch. That is the function of the federal government's Comptroller General's Office. It is an entirely different thing when an independent power, such as the legislative branch, sees to it that the executive branch obeys the Constitution. This is a point of confusion that should be clarified. We must strengthen the Finance Secretariat's Accounting Office. Anyway, this is the Comptroller General's Office's exclusive duty. This function is very essential.

[EL FINANCIERO] Can presidential power be delimited and kept separate from the ruling party? Up to what point would you maintain a passive position?

[Zedillo] I believe that it is essential that it be done that way. The country's social and economic advances require political advances. One more political advancement, not the only aspect of advancement that Mexico requires, is that we also need to strengthen our party system. This includes the PRI as an independent party, like a party with its own life, but that is going to have much more life as long as the president is not considered, shall we say, the head of the party. In this campaign I have been able to see for myself the PRI's strength, its organizational capacity, the attitude of its rank and file, and I have also been able to verify or even discover that the party could be stronger and thus more useful to a system of competitive parties provided the president systematically rids himself of decisions that pertain only to the party.

This is why I made a very clear commitment, to make my contribution today as a member and as a candidate for internal party reform proposals—proposals that we will make before 1 December. In fact, I intend to make them before 15 November, by which time the presidential elections will have been evaluated.

I want to let you know in advance that I have proposed that the National Executive Committee appoint as soon as possible a new president for the party's National Ideology Commission and that this president, as technical secretary for the Luis Donaldo Colosio Change 21 Foundation, draw up a proposed agenda or proposal on terms of reference, both for the National Committee and me, on what the party's internal reforms should be.

We want to leave this as a party legacy prior to my becoming a completely passive party member in the event that I win the 21 August elections.

[EL FINANCIERO] Permit me to say there have been big problems within the PRI for reasons less than that point. Internal problems had emerged when there was a party leader more or less independent from the president of the republic. Have you thought about the conflicts that would emerge with a leader who refuses to follow the presidential line?

[Zedillo] The design of the party's internal reform must include not only the internal democratic process of selecting candidates but also the process through which the party must select its leaders. One of the aspects party reform must address is how to prevent one single person within the party from having too much power.

[EL FINANCIERO] Everybody has his view or views for the country after 21 August. What is your view? How do you visualize the country after 21 August?

[Zedillo] Let us focus on 21 August. There are elements that make us be, let us say, moderately optimistic regarding the results of the elections, which will favor us

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in the Presidency as well as help us obtain the majority of seats in Congress. I hope a situation of order, legality, and good sense will prevail after 21 August. We will make a huge effort to immediately adopt the mechanisms to hold talks with all the national political forces.

I believe it is very important to say at this time that regardless of what happens on 21 August, all political parties will have political lives. The 21st of August must not be seen as the end of a stage in the country's political life but, rather, as the beginning of another stage in which we all have an important role to play, even the smaller political forces. Should I garner most of the Mexicans' votes, I will partially pledge to continue preparing to accept a big responsibility on 1 December, advocating an effort to hold talks and reach a consensus with the other Mexican political forces.

[EL FINANCIERO] In this outline of presidential power, which, in essence, will change the structure of power with the government reforms, and by giving more power to economic groups than they have ever had, how can you guarantee the Presidency will not be vulnerable when it confronts the new national and international economic power groups that have greater strength in the country and government?

[Zedillo] Democracy will guarantee this point. Democracy is based on constitutional order. The people converge in democratic processes believing or following a number of political principles that are stipulated in our Constitution—the principles of sovereignty, freedom, democracy, and justice. People will reject anything that contradicts those principles in the measure that we educate our people further, under a more democratic system, so they can defend those principles.

The point is we are going to have stronger branches now. I believe all the branches will be much stronger than they are today, because today we have a strong Presidency, scant power in the legislative and judicial branches, and very little power in the states and municipalities. What we are going to see is the transfer of power from the president to the other branches, and the sum total will not be what we had before but will give the government much more power. Thus, it will have greater strength to counter any power alien to the country or to the legitimate objectives of the Constitution.

[EL FINANCIERO] Do you believe this pretension of a pluralistic government will prevent the Presidency from being subjected to economic power?

[Zedillo] That subjection has never existed, and there will be no reason for it to happen.

[EL FINANCIERO] What type of country do you expect to find on 1 December?

[Zedillo] I believe President Salinas will hand in on 1 December a country that has solid economic bases, particularly compared to the country he received six years ago, when a serious crisis was only beginning to be overcome. We will have an even more pluralistic and diverse country, more political participation, which not only implies a challenge but also an enormous opportunity, because that is paving the way toward a strengthened democracy. There will be indisputable setbacks in the judicial system. I honestly believe we will begin from scratch in this area and will have to implement a comprehensive reform. The process of deterioration has occurred very rapidly, or perhaps the problem already existed, but we did not realize in time what had happened to the justice and security system. We have an enormous task to tackle in that area.

[EL FINANCIERO] What will be your government's first actions?

[Zedillo] I believe they have been pointed out during this campaign. I have mentioned three major priorities: justice, more jobs, which would help advance the main programs to fight poverty. [sentence as published]

Salinas Political Legacy Assessed

94CA0154A Mexico City REFORMA in Spanish 4 Aug 94 p 7A

[Commentary by Lorenzo Meyer, Colegio de Mexico international relations specialist: "Understanding Time"]

[Text] "The talk here is of time wasted, which as the saying goes, the saints weep for."

The quote is the title of a 1939 poem by Renato Leduc, but it suits this article and the political juncture in Mexico to a tee.

Indeed, President Carlos Salinas and his group refused or were not able to negotiate in timely fashion the grand commitment to democracy that the country needed after 1988 to continue its difficult modernization in peace.

Now, when there is practically no time left, a supreme effort must be made to prevent us, society at large, from having to weep for the time wasted.

When 1 January 1994 came upon us, five long years had passed, and Salinas could well have used them to develop, propose, negotiate, and implement a real and historic political reform, the one that every sensible observer knew Mexico needed even before 1 July 1988 or 1 January 1994.

Such a reform entails the framework for a transition from the closed, authoritarian rule of PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party] to a new, open, pluralistic playing field that is in keeping with the times and that is the only way for the country to make the leap into the 21st century without lapsing into violence or ungovernability.

The need to negotiate a new set of rules with the main political actors did not require the Salinas people to convert to democracy after the fashion of Saint Paul on the road to Damascus.

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No, what was really needed was something less dramatic and more realistic: good political sense, prudence, a bit of humility, and above all a long-term view.

For the Salinas people and for the country as a whole it would have been better if the young technocrats in power had tempered their fondness for total power with a combination of intelligence and an instinct for survival, if they had recalled Prince Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, who cautioned that there are eras in history when one must change in order to keep what one has or at least some of it.

No one can deny that after their victorious disaster (or disastrous victory) in 1988 the president and his group had the incentive, and the time, to negotiate with the opposition.

And I am talking about negotiations not only with the "loyal opposition" (PAN [National Action Party]) but above all with the most unruly opposition, the one that it had struck at most savagely inside and outside the electoral process: the Cardenists.

What could have and ought to have been negotiated? Simply the set of rules that would prevent the battles between opposition and government from sharpening in future elections (1991 and 1994) and the country from returning to the verge of a catastrophe, as in 1988.

The central political goal should have been that none of the major candidates would cast doubt on the impartiality of the process at the next election.

To achieve this goal, the opposition farthest removed from Salinas, the Cardenists, had to accept the new rules.

During the early years of the presidential term there was time to seek a consensus on this agenda for a transition from the old PRI authoritarianism to democracy, but the Salinas group lacked the political will and was too arrogant to do so.

True political reform, one that would have given elections the role that has so far been denied them in Mexico (as the primary and authentic source of the right to govern), would have bolstered the country's stability as the century draws to a close.

Such a reform would have a price, of course: taking away PRI's status as the party of the State and introducing electoral uncertainty to a political class that is accustomed to 65 years of uninterrupted triumphs.

But the gains would have outweighed the cost. The PRD [Party of the Democratic Revolution] would have been given objective reasons to support the new political arrangement, and Carlos Salinas would have taken a proud step into history.

This same policy might have dampened the accumulated resentment of grass-roots groups that reject party politics, radicalized as they have been by long years of authoritarianism, inequality, marginalization, corruption, and domineering bureaucracies.

It is true that the government did not know before 1994 what was going to happen in Chiapas, but it is also true that it had reason to assume something of the sort.

If the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN) had burst onto a political scene marked by the government's real desire to carry forward a transition to democracy, then Carlos Salinas's government would have had what it lacks today: active social support to confront with the legitimate violence of the State the challenge of what would have been, under those conditions, an anachronistic EZLN.

But that was not ultimately the case. The president, not the Zapatists, was the anachronism. And lacking legitimacy, the government had to negotiate, recognize, de facto, the status of the Zapatists as belligerents, and resign itself to bearing witness to a Democratic Convention in the thick of the Chiapas jungle.

The example of Spain is germane here. When the Spanish system shifted from authoritarianism to democracy, the political violence of ETA [Basque Fatherland and Liberty], which seeks to create a utopia through terrorism, lost the raison d'etre that it once had.

A thin book by the famous Spanish sociologist Juan J. Linz, entitled "El factor tiempo en un cambio de regimen" [The Time Factor in a Change of Regime], which the Institute for Democratic Transition Studies published in Mexico this year, addresses the time factor under circumstances like the ones prevailing in Mexican politics today.

In the introduction, Helena Varela and Alonso Lujambio summarize Linz's thesis thus: When regimes enter crises and fall, time "is itself a variable that may lead to different outcomes, even when the structural variables remain constant." (p. 18)

The idea is as simple as it is important. A political action has different outcomes depending on the moment in history in which it is taken.

Deferred actions, the Spanish sociologist says, "are those that could have been taken in a previous situation, and their postponement represents a waste of time without apparent benefit."

"Postponing a decision, though it may seem to enhance a regime's stability, in most cases has the opposite effect of causing a loss of consensus." (p. 38)

One could almost say that Linz was thinking about a situation like the one in Mexico today.

A bit further on the author caps off his thesis: "Time, in politics as in life, is a resource. Therefore, wasting time or simply even the fear of wasting it could adversely affect the stability of a regime, the opportune changes

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within it that could have facilitated the process had they been made at the proper time." (p. 39)

From this perspective, if the political reform that Carlos Salinas rejected for so long and finally accepted after the Chiapas uprising in January 1994 had been negotiated and implemented by him earlier, when he was still pulling the main strings in politics and time was not pressing on him, the nature of the current political conflict might be different, the positions might be less polarized, and there might be a better chance for a civilized outcome of Mexico's transition than there is today.

At this juncture it has become very clear that the Salinas group miscalculated.

From the start it decided not to dismantle its inherited authoritarianism but rather to personalize and strengthen it.

Once it had been strengthened, Salinas made thorough use of it to set in motion a major economic reform that was going to create very great interests but that was also going to hurt many vested interests and, above all, send the bill to the huge masses that had not had a chance to create any interest whatsoever.

This authoritarianism was the vehicle that cleared the way for Mexican neoliberalism.

All indications are that until late last year the people in power felt that if their economic agenda was successful, true political reform, the transition to democracy, could and ought to be postponed until a future date that Jose Angel Gurria put at around 2006 or 2012.

In the meantime, piecemeal political reforms negotiated with the moderate opposition, with PAN, would suffice.

The Salinas people may have realized back then that neither presidential authoritarianism nor the party of the State had a future, but they wagered that the date with destiny for both of them would take place in the distant future, when others would do the negotiating and pay the price.

It is also obvious that the president and his advisers took it for granted too quickly that the challenge which the PRD and Cardenism posed would fade as their own economic success took hold and that, therefore, they did not have to sit down and negotiate with Cuauhtemoc Cardenas.

Things have turned out differently. To begin with, the "neoliberal miracle" itself is less solid than it seems, as it rests on one of the largest trade deficits, if not the largest, in the world: $24 billion. Against this backdrop, the day that foreign capital dries up, the entire system will be plunged into crisis.

The Free Trade Agreement is finally a fact, but what is not is the promise of growth that was sold to the public.

Finally, not enough jobs have as yet been created, and interest rates have yet to fall to levels that would enable Mexican producers to compete with foreign producers and create jobs.

If things did not go as Salinas expected in the economic arena, they did even less so in politics.

Cardenism did not disappear; the EZLN emerged on its left, and there are already other players to the left of the Zapatists.

And amid this challenge came the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the dismantling of Salinas's inner circle, a replacement candidate, and rifts within PRI.

The reform that was not undertaken in time is being attempted now when time has become an extraordinarily scarce commodity, as scarce as credibility. The upshot is pitiful institutional weakness.

In short, the time that has gone by cannot be made up. Therefore, in the few days remaining before 21 August we need new and dramatic moves by the main political players, principally but not solely the president, that will reverse the prevailing climate of mistrust and reconfirm the viability of a peaceful, constructive transition from an antidemocracy that has lost its vitality to a genuine democracy, which is the indispensable foundation of a modern economy.

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El Salvador

Calderon Comments on Joint Commission Report

PA1208184194 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 10 Aug 94

[From the "Up-to-Date" newscast; all passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] President Armando Calderon Sol said today that the investigation of the Joint Commission was not able to prove the existence of illegally armed groups with political motives. For the president, the only useful result of the Commission's work are the recommendations at the end of the report, which he assured will be fulfilled.

After having studied the Joint Commission's report for several days, President Calderon Sol issued a statement in which he appeared somewhat critical of the work carried out by the Commission in charge of investigating the existence and composition of the so-called death squads.

[Calderon] "I would say that the Joint Commission's report does not shed light on anything new. I believe it leaves the situation the same as it was before the report. That is, the investigation is not clear, it has not fulfilled the task it was charged with."

Of the names delivered in an annex to the president and the attorney general, Calderon Sol indicated that the Joint Commission mentioned names of people without having sufficient facts to formulate an opinion or enough evidence to initiate the investigation. It would then be a crime to make these names public, as these people would be libeled. For the president, the only thing valid in the report are the recommendations, particularly those on restructuring the judicial system and the professional training of the investigating corps.

[Calderon] "This has involved the efforts of the Supreme Court of Justice, the Legislative Assembly, the efforts of the National Civilian Police [PRC], and the Police investigation groups. It is an effort by the entire Salvadoran civilian society. I believe that all Salvadorans wish to confront this problem together; we will overcome the problem of impunity in our country."

During this interview, the president reiterated that the Joint Commission did not get to the bottom of the problem and that it did not give a clear report on the investigation of the illegally armed groups with political motives. The question of who comprises these groups will continue to be unanswered for who knows how much longer.

Meanwhile Diego Garcia, Onusal [UN Observers for El Salvador] diplomat and former member of the dissolved Joint Commission, explained that the investigation did not seek to blame or legally process those involved in the death squads, as this procedure belongs to the judicial authorities.

With regard to some criticism that the Joint Commission's report does not give specific indications of the existence of illegally armed groups, Diego Garcia said that the report's goal was to make suggestions to the government to orient the investigations.

[Garcia] "The goal of the Joint Commission's report was not legal, that is, that report did not seek to accuse persons and much less to process them. That task belongs to the Attorney General's Office and the legal system."

For Diego Garcia, the government's attitude has been positive, because it will pave the way to eliminate the remains of illegally armed groups with political motives.

[Garcia] "We have a great deal of trust that the new Supreme Court of Justice, which has just been appointed, will take up the recommendations and suggest pertinent legal reforms."

The human rights expert and member of the dissolved Joint Commission trusts that the PNC and the nation's judicial system will complement the investigation of the cases involving those armed groups to pinpoint the guilty.

Economy Minister, Information Secretary Sworn In

PA1408205894 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2215 GMT 12 Aug 94

[Text] San Salvador, 12 Aug (NOTIMEX)—Salvadoran President Armando Calderon Sol today swore in Eduardo Zablah Touche, the new economy minister, and Francisco Imendia, the presidency information secretary.

Zablah Touche replaces Enrique Cordova, who resigned in the latter part of July, allegedly for undisclosed health reasons. Imendia, a well-known domestic journalist, is replacing Francisco Flores, who resigned for personal reasons last Monday. Both officials promised the Salvadoran president that they would work for the welfare and development of this Central American country.

During the ceremony Calderon also swore in Camilo Bolanos, the new Salvadoran Institute of Tourism (ISTU) president.

Calderon Orders Creation of Investigative Honor Tribunals

PA1708025694 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 13 Aug 94 p A-3

[Text] President Armando Calderon Sol has ordered the creation of honor tribunals in order to investigate military personnel linked to corruption and cases of crime. He also has ordered the Armed Forces to carry out a

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purge in its ranks. "As commander general of the Armed Forces, I have given instructions for an internal evaluation of the institution and for military personnel who are involved in criminal acts to be dismissed, brought to trial, and sent to jail," the president stated.

"Impunity has ended in our country, and no one, no person or sector can be above the law," and anyone who furthers the wave of violence in the country will be investigated and sent to court, he has said.

According to Calderon Sol, the Armed Forces cannot protect people who have committed crimes, and, for this purpose, he has already ordered that honor tribunals be created and that they start working. The measure is adopted at a time when the Armed Forces are being heavily criticized, because several of its members have participated in numerous criminal actions.

The president has said cases such as the one of the two high-ranking officials linked to extortion have to be subjected to the law to effectively confront the problem of organized crime.

Calderon Sol has reiterated the current government is willing to combat this situation regardless of who has to sample the weight of the law. "Regardless of from where they come, we will try all who commit a crime in this country, even if they are officers, lawyers, or physicians. We are going to eradicate impunity in El Salvador so as to have the social peace Salvadorans greatly deserve," he has said.

In this sense, he has spotlighted the importance of the honor tribunals in the Armed Forces starting a general cleanup (a purge) within its ranks and recovering the institution's prestige and honor. "It is not the institution but the people who commit crimes and who have to be responsible for their actions," the leader has said.

Guatemala

FRG, PAN Lead in Preliminary Election Results

PA1608130394 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 15 Aug 94 p 2

[Text] As this edition went to press, the Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG) was winning. These are national figures, according to information from the Supreme Electoral Tribunal's Data Processing Center.

The report noted that the FRG has 26,018 votes, followed by the National Vanguard Party (PAN) with 24,143 votes, the Union National Center (UCN) with 12,209 votes, and the Guatemalan Christian Democracy (DCG) with 11,523 votes.

Given these results, the FRG might win six seats; the PAN, four; the DCG, three; the UCN, two; and the MAS [Solidarity Action Movement], one.

PAN Victory in the Capital

The PAN's victory over the FRG was obvious in the metropolitan area.

The PAN won 29,726 votes against the FRG's 24,201 at 510 tables. [figures as published] Experts said that the PAN was expected to maintain that advantage over its closest rival in these elections in the capital.

Emilio Saca, second on the PAN ticket in the capital, said: "We did not expect to win by such a broad margin. This shows that people in the capital remember that we acted correctly in Congress, we confronted Chinchilla Vega, and we resigned when the people so demanded," he added.

The FRG's Francisco Reyes Lopez, commenting on results in the capital, said that the PAN's victory was not surprising, as the second government [segundo gobierno], which is the capital, has given that party great deal of help.

Traditional Parties Go Down To Defeat in Elections

PA1608163594 Guatemala City Cadena de Emisoras Unidas in Spanish 1300 GMT 16 Aug 94

[From the "News Patrol" newscast]

[Text] Political analysts and leaders of relatively new political parties have deemed the 14 August legislative elections a big defeat for the country's traditional parties [words indistinct].

What happened to the Guatemalan Christian Democracy [DCG] party shows Guatemalans' disapproval of traditional politicians. In the halls of the computer center in Parque de la Industria, people were commenting that [words indistinct] the 1994 legislative elections. The DCG was one of the main political forces in the current legislature. But in the new Congress it will rank third with 13 seats, (?11) district seats and two national seats.

The political power of the Union of the National Center [UCN], of the late news entrepreneur Jorge Carpio Nicolle, will be reduced to eight seats in the new Congress scheduled to begin sessions on 1 September [date as heard]. Of these eight seats, six correspond to district seats, and two correspond to national seats.

The National Liberation Movement [MLN] will be fifth with two district seats, and a relatively new political party, the Democratic Union [Union Democratica], will have one seat representing Huehuetenango.

Meanwhile, controversial retired General Efrain Rios Montt could become the new president of the Guatemalan National Congress, according to some of his fellow party members, who refused to comment on an eventual presidential candidacy by Rios Montt in the November 1995 elections. Rios Montt led the Guatemalan Revolutionary Front, FRG, candidates for

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deputy. [Words indistinct] one seat. The way will reportedly be clear for the former military officer to become the president of the National Congress, because his party won 33 of the 60 seats available, according to Supreme Electoral Tribunal estimates.

In the meantime, the Legislative Palace will see a new Congress at work in 30 days, on 13 September. The 60 new National Congress deputies have been elected by 20 percent of the more than 3 million Guatemalans registered on the national electoral lists. According to the constitutional amendments approved in a popular consultation held on 14 August, the principal political forces that will try to legislate and change the direction of the National Congress will be the FRG and the National Alliance Party, which won most of the seats, followed by the DCG and the UCN, which suffered a defeat in these elections. The DCG elected 13 deputies and the UCN eight.

Final Legislative Election Results Released

PA1608231194 Guatemala City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 16 Aug 94 p 2

[Report by Ramon Hernandez]

[Text] According to final election results released yesterday by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE), only six of the 18 political parties that participated in Sunday's elections will be represented in the new Congress.

The Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG), led by controversial former President General Jose Efrain Rios Montt, came in first by winning 32 of the 80 seats. The FRG is followed by the National Vanguard Party (PAN) with 24 seats and the Guatemalan Christian Democracy (DCG) with 13 seats.

According to final results, the Union of National Center (UCN) won eight seats in the Congress, the National Liberation Movement (MLN) won two seats, and the Democratic Union (UD) won one seat.

Because these six parties were the only ones that will be represented in the new Congress, they will have the difficult task of regaining the credibility the legislative branch had lost.

According to political analysts, the party hardest hit in these elections was the UCN, which finished fourth with eight seats. In the past, the UCN had been the second-strongest political force in the country.

The UCN campaign manager believes the results show a reaction to the fact that "we did not have a party president; we have been without a leader since Jorge Carpio Nicolle was assassinated." The UCN campaign manager added that the PAN and the FRG came in first and second because they waged a "very strong presidential campaign with candidates like Alvaro Arzu and Rios Montt."

The DGC held onto third place and will play the role of spoiler [visagra] in the Congress, which will be headed by former President Jose Efrain Rios Montt who views the Congress as a launching pad for a new political drive that will ultimately take him to the presidency of the Republic next year.

The TSE also confirmed that 79 percent of the 3.5 million Guatemalans eligible to vote refrained from doing so. According to the TSE, this is the highest percentage of absenteeism in the history of legislative elections in the country.

During the preliminary adjudication of seats, the TSE made an error and awarded the Totonicapan seat to the FRG when the PAN was indeed the real winner.

The six political parties—including three right-wing parties (PAN, FRG, MLN), one centrist party (DCG), and one center-left party (UD)—will have a "full" agenda for the next 16 months. The 12 political parties that did not win seats in these elections will not disappear from the political scene, because this only occurs during presidential elections.

Results of the National Elections

Party	Total Votes	Percentage	Deputies
FRG	206,960	32.22	32
PAN	162,161	25.25	24
DCG	78,003	12.14	13
UCN	57,152	8.90	8
MLN	28,572	4.45	2
MAS [Solidarity Action Movement]	20,417	3.18	—
UD	19,734	3.07	1
PR [Revolutionary Party]	17,746	2.76	—
PSD [Democratic Socialist Party]	13,640	2.12	—
PRG [Guatemalan Reformist Party]	13,015	2.03	—
CAN [Nationalist Authentic Central]	9,690	1.51	—
FUN [National Unity Front]	6,501	1.01	—
PID [Democratic Institutional Party]	5,599	0.87	—
MD [Movement of the Shirtless]	3,150	0.49	—
Total	642,340	100.00	80

De Leon: Government Willing To Continue Peace Talks

PA1708044994 Guatemala City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 15 Aug 94 p 7

[Report by Elder Interiano]

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[Text] President Ramiro de Leon Carpio has said his government is willing to continue the peace talks, adding guerrilla commanders have caused the current stalemate "due to divisions among guerrilla factions." President de Leon made that statement during a news conference at the presidential palace, during which he also commented on the recent congressional elections.

De Leon reiterated his government's willingness to end the armed conflict, adding proof of this willingness is the "almost six agreements" that have been signed this year. He mentioned as another important factor the constant demand before UN authorities for international verification as part of the overall agreement on human rights signed on 29 March.

"The government is not the one blocking the talks but, rather, the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] due to internal divisions preventing fluid negotiations. In addition, the recent discovery of an arms arsenal also affected them, as it harmed their international credibility," the president said.

De Leon said key factors are the "voluntary" surrender of members of the Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) who reported the location of the arsenal and the existing "conflicts" among the rebel commanders.

"That situation has caused problems on the other side, not in my government, which maintains its position in favor of signing a peace agreement. For that reason, we will ask UN Moderator Jean Arnault to immediately install a preliminary verification commission," de Leon said.

The Guatemalan guerrillas emerged in the 1960's to fight against the militaristic policies that existed at that time. The rebel leadership was subsequently disbanded, however, although a few rebels fled to the mountains to protect themselves and "reorganize their forces."

It was not until the 1980's that the FAR activists, the Revolutionary Organization of the People in Arms (ORPA), and the Poor People's Guerrillas (EGP) joined their forces, creating the URNG. Members of that rebel organization are engaged in an armed conflict with the Army, which has lasted more than 30 years.

Although de Leon and the guerrilla commanders have expressed a willingness to sign a peace agreement, the talks are at a standstill, and the involved parties have not agreed yet on a date to resume the negotiations.

Honduras

Reina Reiterates Call for Troops To Patrol Streets

PA1608173994 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1851 GMT 12 Aug 94

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 12 Aug (ACAN-EFE)—The drastic hike in the crime rate has prompted Honduran President Carlos Roberto Reina to again call out troops to patrol the streets in the country's main cities. Reina issued an executive decree that declared the entire country in an "emergency situation" while the power shortages, which have been negatively affecting this Central American country since last February, continue. The Armed Forces will guard the cities to ensure public order, protect the people from criminals, and prevent crimes, the president observed.

This is the second call for soldiers to guard the streets because of increased crime in Honduras' main cities, which are in semi-darkness because of power rationing.

Colonel Arnoldo Cabrera, regional police chief in northern San Pedro Sula, reported at the beginning of the month that more than 500 people had died due to violence in three of the 18 Honduran departments during the first six months of 1994. More than 50 armed gangs ravage Tegucigalpa's neighborhoods and districts during the power outages and leave an average of two deaths each day, according to forensic records.

The approximately 7,000 policemen in the country are not enough to prevent crimes in the streets, Public Security Forces (FSP) Commander Col. Roberto Lazarus has stated. The officer hopes that this time the Army will "cooperate" with the crime prevention crusade.

General Luis Alonso Discua Elvir challenged President Carlos Roberto Reina in making the first call for soldiers to be sent to guard the streets. Discua said the Army is short 7,000 men and cannot send available soldiers to guard the streets because they are in battalions working on tasks that he did not further specify.

The National Congress has changed a constitutional article that bans compulsory military service and replaces it with a "volunteer, democratic, educational, and humanist" service. This change will be up for confirmation in a second legislative session.

The military command has demanded that President Reina allow it to recruit young men by force and increase the Army's complement. If this is not allowed, they will not send soldiers out to guard the streets.

Colonel Jose Martinez Amador, commander of the 105th Infantry Brigade in northern Honduras, reacted to this second call, saying that "when there are enough elements (men)" they will cooperate with the police. Martinez Amador asserted that there is at least a 60 percent deficit in military units and that the Army needs these men.

Guillermo Pagan Solorzano, Armed Forces spokesman, told ACAN-EFE that "the Army is willing and will accept the orders" of the president of the Republic to assist the police in fighting crime.

FSP Commander Lazarus also asked the people to cooperate with the surveillance activities in their communities because there is only one policeman for each 1,500 people.

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With the increase in common crime, a self-styled "Executioners of Thieves Squad" has arisen in the past few days, claiming responsibility for the deaths of two criminals in Tegucigalpa.

Several criminals have turned up dead, reportedly killed by citizens in defending themselves during attacks by the thieves since security policemen were nowhere to be found.

Reina Attends 28th Anniversary of Naval Force

PA1708043194 Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish 13 Aug 94 p 3

[Excerpt] Ampala, Valle Department—President Carlos Roberto Reina said yesterday in the presence of the chief of the Honduran Armed Forces [FFAA] "battles are not won with coerced soldiers," in view of the insistence on the part of the military to keep compulsory military service. The FFAA insisted yesterday that they needed a bigger budget and that President Reina should "reconsider" the implementation of volunteer military service.

As special guest of the 28th anniversary celebration of the Naval Force, located in Coyolito, Valle, Reina inspected the naval installations to learn of their needs.

During a lengthy military ceremony, awards were given to the former Naval Force commanders, including the current FFAA chief, Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, who received the "Tiger Shark" insignia.

President Reina pledged in his address to intercede before Congress to help ease the crisis of the various military units.

Reina said he felt satisfied with a report stating 28 citizens have gone to La Mosquitia Battalion and the Naval Base to volunteer for military duty, because "when the will to serve the fatherland exists, we all can reach an agreement." He also pledged to combat any kind of corruption in social institutions, adding: "I cannot but affirm that fighting drug trafficking and corruption, with the help of the FFAA, are the main tasks." He said he has given instructions so that rules are created to avoid border incidents that take place over fishing exploitation.

Gen. Luis Alonso Discua Elvir, in turn, warned the "FFAA, regardless of sectarian disputes and differences, are an institution that are not at the exclusive service of any political party." "That reason is why," he added, they vehemently and patriotically defend the basic principles of their unity and institutional impartiality as a simple and unavoidable patriotic duty in the face of attacks from within and without by those who have always regarded the military institution as an insurmountable wall to their dastardly plans and their honorless attitudes. He said those individuals will never succeed in their dishonest purposes.

He affirmed the fulfillment of duty also imposes effort, because, as has been rightly stated, "temples have never been built with illusions, nor have battles been won with fireworks."

"We are aware we must always seek to overcome the adversities of the present to avoid living memories of the past," he said. Naval Captain Bruno Giordano Fontana Hedman, Naval Force commander, lashed out against those who propose a reduction of the FFAA. He asked whether those who are proposing an FFAA reduction know the consequences of their intentions, which are creating a situation that, in his opinion, is weakening the mechanisms of defense.

"We are aware of the unforeseen consequences of such radical attitudes when we have yet to define our maritime borders, and drug trafficking is increasing the onslaught of international crime," he stated. In view of that position, Fontana cited Soviet socialist leader Vladimir Lenin, who said "there will be no reason for armies in 50 years; we will have also eroded our enemies before conflict breaks out; the military apparatus will fail at the time of need."

Afterward, he used a religious book to cite a parable from the Bible that reads: "For our part, we can only say let he who has eyes see and he who has ears hear at this hour what we are living in Honduras." [passage omitted]

Professional Group Says Threat of Coup Latent

PA1608235594 Tegucigalpa EL PERIODICO DE HONDURAS in Spanish 12 Aug 94 p 2

[Report by Donaldo Torres Argenal]

[Text] The threat of a coup d'etat is a latent conditon in our country that is curbed only by international pressures; that is, it is the U.S. position toward armies that is curbing this sort of undemocratic action.

This statement is one of the conclusions reached yesterday during the news conference by a group of professionals who belong to various minority political parties. This group drafted a document criticizing the actions of the government of Carlos Roberto Reyna for its tardiness in making decisions, the repercussions of the new tax measures, and the new role the Armed Forces should take in this current historical moment.

The group, which is said to be unnamed, is comprised by Cecilio Zelaya Lozano, former National University rector; Gertalina Cerrato, president of the Nurses College; Leovigildo Rivera, president of the Economists College; Elsa Palaou, president of the Medical College; and political leaders Jorge Yllescas, Ruben Palma Carrasco, and Efrain Diaz Arrivillaga.

To that list is added, among others, Roberto Ugarte Soto; Roy Guevara Arzu; Jose Adan Castelar; Matias Funes; Ramon Oqueli; and Miguel Angel Funez, all of who are prominent professionals and political authorities.

The Moral Deterioration of the Nation

Ruben Palma, Efrain Diaz Arrivillaga, and Jorge Yllescas were charged with explaining the position of the

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group, "which has observed with great concern the nation's speedy moral, social, and economic deterioration."

They say "most of the adopted measures and measures yet to be adopted by the government tend to heighten, far from combating, the crisis, while there are no signs of interest or courage to adopt measures that could lead to overall development."

According to the document, the indifference of the civilian and military authorities to combat the growing and threatening wave of crime, which is endangering the life and security of the people and their properties, is a matter of concern.

Total Rejection of the "Economic Measures"

These professionals have clarified they do not support the government's economic measures that are contained in the package of new taxes, because these measures only seek additional foreign loans and do not consider that those commitments mortgage the present and future generations and contribute to a greater restriction of the economy, which translates into additional debt, poverty, and dependency.

We are concerned with the serious crisis in power, because not only does it mean there are unlit homes and streets, it is also causing the immobilization of the nation's services and production, resulting in even more serious effects than those produced by a general sit-down strike.

According to the document, the crisis will represent a $300-million loss this year and will have a bearing on the alarming fiscal deficit and the balance of payments. In other words, additional dollars will have to be earmarked for fuel purchases.

The group expresses in the document its regret that the liberal government is calling for a national convergence with the sole purpose of negotiating the acceptance of new economic measures in exchange for making concessions to each group summoned.

This approach, unfortunately, drives the various groups involved to consider their own interests only, setting aside the overall and permanent interests of the whole nation.

That approach, with those characteristics, is a failure and will bring negative consequences to the people.

A People Fed Up With Politicians

The document demands that the government issue a decree to drastically regulate the activities of the political parties, primarily those activities oriented toward organizing or reactivating internal trends, candidate hopefuls, and all types of publicity.

According to the analysts, this decision is urgent and unpostponable, because the politicians of the two major parties are prematurely, eagerly, and irresponsibly involved in the reactivation and organization of internal trends to launch their candidates, without taking into account that the nation is demanding solutions, unity, creativity, initiative, sacrifice, and a great deal of work.

Crime Versus Honest People

In addition, emphasis is given to combating violence by placing a soldier or a policeman in each of the urban transportation vehicles and by creating a mounted police force to combat cattle rustling and crime in rural areas.

The neighborhoods or vicinities that have higher levels of crime should have a neighborhood watch to combat and prevent crime. In addition, a general and permanent disarmament must take place.

No Additional Negotiations With the IMF and the World Bank

Among the proposals presented by the group of professionals to the government is to put off, for an appropriate period, negotiations with international credit institutions so as to make new proposals with a "human face."

The necessary administrative measures should be adopted to clean up and reorient the activities of the General Custom Directorate and the Tax Directorate that are aimed at recovering 1.6 billion lempiras by the government in taxes that are evaded annually by tax payers as a result of contraband and fiscal fraud.

In addition, the government should create conditions for security for local and foreign investors, and it should stimulate production, particularly production for food products and those destined for export.

Military Arrogance and Blackmail

After presentation of the document, Efrain Diaz Arrivillaga strongly criticized the position of the Armed Forces. "The military has been blackmailing the government. In other words, we cannot combat crime, because military service is now voluntary and not obligatory." This position is a total deceit. What we are asking for is that the Armed Forces not place itself above society but, rather, join the effort.

The report added Luis Alfonso Discua, military chief, and those who surround him should put aside their arrogance when they come before the people and accept the fact their role is to keep public order.

Coup d'Etat Is Latent

Meanwhile, Ruben Palma, in reference to circulating rumors several days ago about a possible coup d'etat, has said: "This is a latent situation."

He has said the reason why this type of action has not occurred in Honduras against the democratic system is because it is restrained by international demands and the

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position adopted by the U.S. Government in past years not to support this type of action.

"We have knowledge of certain sectors of society favoring a coup d'etat with certain military groups," Palma has said.

Panama

President-Elect Encourages New Law on Public Forces

PA1608184094 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Aug 94 p 1

[Text] President-elect Ernesto Perez Balladares said that it would be advisable for the new Legislative Assembly installed on 1 September to approve an organic law for the police, because Panama cannot surrender its right to form a public force needed to defend the nation at any given time.

Perez told LA PRENSA that he does not believe Panama needs a permanent Army. Nevertheless, he believes it is also true that the country should have a military force for its own defense.

The leader of the "United People" alliance, which led him to power in May, made these comments during a meeting with groups of the unemployed in Colon Province.

He said that he has repeatedly stated that it is important that after 1 September, the new Legislative Assembly should issue an organic law to regulate the National Police.

Right now the Legislative Assembly is debating a draft bill on constitutional reforms that include the elimination of the Army and changes to Electoral Tribunal duties to give it greater autonomy.

Perez described as "very positive" for the democratic process that the Electoral Tribunal should have greater independence, especially prior to elections. "In this regard I agree with the constitutional reforms," he said.

President Guillermo Endara said this week that it was Perez Balladares himself who proposed the constitutional reform to eliminate the Army and create the National Police.

The PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] wing submitted a minority report that rejects abolishing the Army, but this was rejected by a majority in the Legislative Assembly.

MOLIRENA [Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement] Legislator Jorge Rosas said that the purpose of constitutionally eliminating the Army is to maintain the neutrality of the Panamanian state and to avoid coups d'etat.

Rosas said that this is a reform aimed at purging the Constitution so that the military does not meddle in government affairs.

The legislator said that the reforms should be approved when one takes into account the coups d'etat and the military meddling in the government.

During special sessions, the Legislative Assembly decided to eliminate Chapter 4 of the Constitution's Title 6, which refers to the General Council of State.

Legislators from various parties arrived at a consensus, after the PRD proposed that the General Council of State should be made up of the president, who would preside, the two vice presidents, the Legislative Assembly president, the Supreme Court president, the ministers of state, directors of autonomous or semi-autonomous institutions, the comptroller and solicitor general, and the presidents of the provincial councils.

Carlos Arellano Lennox said that the decision was made because there was no reason for its existence as it was an organization created by the military to enable it to legally participate in executive branch decisionmaking.

He explained that these days there is no reason to create an organization like the General Council of State to coordinate work within the government.

Legislators also debated Title 12 on the public forces. During the debate they submitted a proposal that "all Panamanians are obligated to bear arms to defend national independence and national integrity. Only by international agreement or for national defense can special forces subordinate to civilian power be organized."

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Argentina

Di Tella Discusses AMIA Case, Explains Position on Haiti

PY1708005194 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1419 GMT 11 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 11 Aug (NA) — Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella has admitted that "the greatest suspicion lies in the fact that Iran is not behind the attack (against the AMIA) [Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association], that it is more than probable that the perpetrator is someone who received Iranian support, but at the same time acted autonomously from that country."

Regarding diplomats Gholamreza Znageneh and Ahmad Reza Asqhari [names as received], accredited to Buenos Aires, Di Tella indicated that the Foreign Ministry "will ask Tehran to deprive them of their diplomatic immunity so that they can give their testimony."

With respect to a possible rupture of relations with Iran, the foreign minister stressed that "the situation has become so very delicate that nothing can be rejected."

Moreover, he clarified that "to say 'delicate' does not mean to say that measures such as a rupture will be adopted."

In an interview with the newspaper PAGINA/12, Di Tella denied that President Carlos Menem's trip to Jerusalem in 1991 was a gesture in favor of the state headed by Yitzhaq Rabin, and he said that "this rapprochement with Israel concluded the integration of the Jewish community into the community as a whole."

"Menem's visit to Jerusalem did not mean that we were going to join the discussion about the international status of the city, and we do not acknowledge anything that has not been approved by the United Nations," he said.

He also said that "in the Haitian case there is a step backward from democracy to Duvalierism [duvalierismo] and the ton ton macoutes," and he recalled that Argentina "maintained that a U.S. invasion and not a multilateral invasion would be catastrophic for the Caribbean island."

"We voted in favor of a UN-supported invasion because historically the United States has always resorted to the Security Council in order to invade a country in this hemisphere," he said.

In this respect, he stated that "if an invasion is not resorted to, then resignation is the only recourse."

He explained that Argentina's position in that conflict has dropped from being in a frontline position to a position of logistical support, because "we came to the decision that a multinational force requires months of joint training and this is not viable."

"That possibility could be considered; instead, the maintaining of a vessel is viable, or guaranteeing the running of the water works in stage two (immediately after the invasion), and cooperating in the reconstruction of Haiti, which is stage three," he said.

Iran Recalls Ambassador

PY1608183394 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1728 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 16 Aug (NA)—The Iranian Foreign Ministry officially announced this afternoon that the Islamic Republic of Iran has recalled its ambassador to Argentina, Hadi Soleymanpur, "for consultations."

A communique released by the embassy says: "A reliable source has reported that the dissemination of groundless accusations and arguments on the part of the media against the Islamic Republic of Iran and its diplomats and dignitaries continues."

The official declaration says that the source added that "despite Iran's official request Argentina has not been able to show any evidence, and press circles continue to publish the same arguments originally advanced by unreliable or politically easily influenced sources."

Envoy to Iran May Not Return

PY1708031594 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2307 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 16 Aug (NA) — Andres Cisneros, Foreign Ministry secretary general, today admitted the possibility that Argentine Ambassador to Iran Mario Quadri del Castillo, who will probably return to Argentina on 18 August, will most probably not return to Tehran, although he made it clear that this will not mean a rupture in relations with that country.

"That possibility always exists," Cisneros stressed, when he was asked about an eventual definite withdrawal of Quadri del Castillo, who will arrive in Argentina to inform the government about things linked to relations with Iran.

Moreover, the government official made it clear that if Quadri del Castillo remains in Argentina, this does not mean a rupture of diplomatic relations with Iran, and he gave as an example the fact that "for months Peru did not name an ambassador to Buenos Aires, yet relations continued."

Cisneros indicated that the Iranian ambassador in Buenos Aires, Hadi Soleymanpur, "is apparently going to Tehran to report," and he added that if the Iranian diplomat's departure "turns into a definitive withdrawal, then the Foreign Ministry" of Iran "will make the appropriate notification."

In this respect, he stressed that "diplomacy always tries to seek a symmetry," meaning if Quadri del Castillo

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remains in Argentina, then it is probable that Soleymanpur will remain in Iran.

The secretary general of the Foreign Ministry also said that relations with Iran "are experiencing a delicate moment, because the Judicial Branch is requesting the presence of four Iranian citizens, three of whom were once diplomats" of that country.

"We, as is appropriate, have flatly rejected all the accusations about the independence and seriousness of Argentina's Judicial Branch, which has no cloud over it," Cisneros said, referring to the letters of protest that the Iranian Government has presented.

He also indicated that the diplomatic steps that are to follow "will depend to a great extent on the degree of cooperation that Iran gives in this investigation."

"We have nothing against Iran as a country or as a state, but we are asking that it cooperate, taking into account the existence of a non-national organization called the Hizballah, which has claimed responsibility for the two attacks," Cisneros said.

Regarding the type of cooperation that has been requested by Argentina, he added that the Hizballah "is an organization that operates in the Middle East, and Argentina has very little information about it, while Middle Eastern nations have a great deal of information."

Ambassador, Judge Interviewed

PY1708035894 Buenos Aires Telefe LS84 Television Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Relay "via satellite link" between Telefe LS84 Television Network studio in Buenos Aires and Canal 13 studio in Asuncion—live or recorded]

[Text] [Anchorman Franco Salomone in Buenos Aires] Let us now quickly go to Asuncion del Paraguay again, to the Canal 13 studio. Natalio (Ayres) is there.

[(Ayres)] In principle, the investigations that we consciously and objectively conducted through TELEFE Noticias began at 0900 today.

Luis Matos, the AMBITO FINANCIERO correspondent in Paraguay, will succinctly explain to us the following:

[Matos] This morning there were actually reports that the detainee, who was detained by Judge Carlos Monges last week, had reportedly confessed, that is, had reportedly said six Arabs had been involved in the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992 and then in the AMIA [Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association] bombing.

Of course, Natalio, we began to investigate. At that moment, I talked to you and you came to Paraguay when you realized that this issue began to take a very significant turn. Well, now, Judge Monges and Argentine Ambassador to Paraguay Raul Carignano, who will surely give you all the data that you require, are here.

[(Ayres)] Dr. Carlos Monges, what can we tell the Argentine audience that is watching you now through TELEFE Noticias with regard to the data that you are handling concerning six people who reportedly live in Paraguay, are Lebanese, and might be involved in the AMIA bombing and the Israeli Embassy bombing?

[Monges] Well now, we were handling these data with my colleague in Ciudad del Este. We secured these data through an investigation that ended with the detention of this Lebanese citizen. We are handling these data at a police level because we virtually cannot work at an official and court level without a petition by the Argentine authorities who have jurisdiction in this case for the investigation of actions that occurred in Buenos Aires. We are exclusively handling these data and information at a police level and with the Interpol people. And we are waiting for a response from the Argentine authorities.

[Salomone] Dr. Monges....?

[(Ayres), interrupting] Argentine Ambassador Dr. Carignano ... [changes thought] Yes, did you ask anything at the studio?

[Salomone] Yes, I don't know if Natalio or Dr. Monges can hear me.

[(Ayres)] Yes, he hears you perfectly. Go ahead.

[Salomone] Dr. Monges, Franco Salomone is greeting you here from Buenos Aires. Can you succinctly tell us how this Lebanese citizen is disclosing significant data on who was responsible for the bombs? In a nutshell, who is he accusing and why is he accusing them?

[Monges] Can you try to....?

[(Ayres), interrupting] Yes, after your talks with detainee (Akram Frahap), who is he actually accusing?

[Monges] Well now, the detainee has not talked to anyone, even to the judge. These data that we are handling represent information that is not linked to the detention of this citizen. And, I repeat, this detainee has not supplied any data. We secured this information after our investigation in Ciudad del Este. This investigation is being exclusively conducted at a police level because we cannot conduct any court action, as we have no jurisdiction, but we are at the disposal of our colleagues of the Argentine courts.

[(Ayres)] Dr. Monges, could we say that these data would indicate that there are six Lebanese people living in Paraguay who would have some type of involvement in the Israeli Embassy bombing in Argentina and the AMIA bombing?

[Monges] Unfortunately, I cannot risk an opinion, but they are interesting data. This is fairly accurate information that will surely be profitably used by the Argentine authorities.

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[(Ayres)] Well, now, we are also posing a question to Argentine Ambassador Raul Carignano. What step did you take after this incident was obviously reported to the public here in Paraguay today?

[Carignano] Well, now, after the judge kindly informed me of the investigations that he is conducting, I informed the authorities in my country of absolutely everything that he has just expressed here and that certainly is being reviewed by our authorities.

[(Ayres)] Could the authorities ask Dr. Monges to take immediate action and detain those people who allegedly are somehow involved in the AMIA bombing?

[Carignano] Above all, with regard to these facts, I believe it is necessary to be very cautious. We must not raise any excitement. I don't want to be anecdotal, but imagine if these people discover that they are being wanted and have still not been detained. This could render the investigation unsuccessful. Therefore, I would say that, within the framework of required caution, we trust in the investigation that the judge is conducting. We trust in his expressions, in his words. We trust in the Paraguayan authorities. We trust in the intelligence services. And we trust that, God willing, the investigation will be completed successfully.

[(Ayres)] My last question, and then I will contact Buenos Aires. Dr. Monges, do you believe the data that your are handling are significant?

[Monges] They are significant and interesting. I believe that, after police and court investigations by my colleagues, the Argentine judges, more data will be gradually secured. I hope that, through the appropriate channels, measures will be taken so that we, here in Paraguay, will be able to contribute to the investigation into this very regrettable incident affecting our Argentine comrades. In a nutshell, they are interesting data.

[(Ayres)] Could we say that these six people, who might be detained any minute, might be involved in the bombing in Argentina?

[Monges] Unfortunately, I cannot talk about people. Please understand me. I can just say and repeat that there are very significant data, information.

[Salomone] Natalio....

[(Ayres), interrupting] Yes, yes. I am listening, Franco.

[Salomone] Yes, I just want the judge to explain, please, if this citizen, who already has been identified, has somehow been involved in the bombing? And, if he has not been involved in the bombing, why is he held in detention or why did he make such a deposition? Can the judge explain this to us?

[Monges] Well, now, this citizen has been arrested following a petition filed by Interpol Beirut for economic crimes. Apparently, there are no indications or clues allegedly linking him to the bombing in Buenos Aires. The data that we are handling involve people of his own nationality, specifically in Ciudad del Este.

[Salomone] Did he make his deposition to receive a benefit in exchange, given his procedural situation?

[Monges] Well, now, I repeat that he has been held incommunicado since his detention and only at 0900 on 17 August will he be summoned by the court for an audience to confirm his identity, which represents the first procedural step in our country for an extradition. The detainee has not talked to other people or to the judge. Therefore, it is not possible to risk any type of presumption in this regard.

[Unidentified anchorwoman at the Buenos Aires studio] Dr. Carignano. Natalio, I don't know if Dr. Carignano is listening to us.

[(Ayres)] Yes, he is listening to you.

[Anchorwoman] Dr. Carignano, it would be important to know if, with the data available to you, in keeping with the information that the judge has supplied to you, you believe this information is significant for the investigation that is being conducted in Argentina and if you already have contacted the judges here in our country to determine if they will file a petition for conducting an investigation in Paraguay?

[Carignano] I have contacted the Argentine Foreign Ministry, the interior minister, and Argentine State Intelligence Secretary Hugo Anzorreguy. All the information is being assessed. After this assessment, we will synchronize within the next few hours with the investigation being conducted by the Paraguayan judge.

[Salomone] Natalio, we will continue with our broadcast, please.

[(Ayres)] In conclusion, I want to tell you that these data that are being handled are really significant, extremely significant. Obviously, we cannot examine these data more closely at this moment because no disclosures on the pretrial inquest handled by the judge can be made.

Nevertheless, I can almost exclusively point out to you that depositions have been made. I would say something like this, that the Lebanese's confession would involve six people, including a brother-in-law of Lebanese (Akram Frahap), who actually participated in the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires in exchange for a truckload of merchandise.

This is the information that I, along with Luis Matos, secured here in Paraguay early this morning, and we are exclusively supplying it to TELEFE Noticias.

These are very concrete, very specific data. Obviously, we cannot ask the judge to confirm all this to us, as no disclosures on the pretrial inquest can be made. Nevertheless, I believe you will understand, Franco, that the

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source is perfect, almost authentic. Therefore, all of a sudden we are disclosing these details in advance for TELEFE.

[Salomone] Of course. Natalio, we appreciate very much your work in Paraguay. Of course, we will constantly keep in touch with you to see how these events develop over the next few hours.

[Anchorwoman] That's right. Many thanks, Natalio. Good bye.

[(Ayres)] Perfect. Many thanks. Good bye.

'International Pressure' Advocated

PY1708033694 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2311 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 16 Aug (NA)—Deputy Foreign Minister Fernando Petrella today said that if the government wants to identify those responsible for the attack against the AMIA [Argentine-Israeli Mutual Association], "the point does not call for breaking relations with a state," but for "exerting international pressure to obtain information."

"The idea is to identify those responsible, and we have to create the international pressure to obtain information and cooperation from other governments," he said.

In this regard, he added that "the point does not call for breaking relations with a government but for exerting international pressure with the means within Argentina's reach: diplomacy and international law."

In statements over a radio station, Petrella added that "the Argentine Government has never blamed a state for the attack," noting that "this is a possibility that Iran has emphatically denied, and it has offered coope ation" for a deeper investigation.

"The specific issue with Iran is being managed in keeping with the developments of the investigations, of the exchange of notes, and of the steps taken by both countries," Petrella explained.

As for the influence that a decision by Federal Judge Juan Jose Galeano had on relations with Iran, Petrella said that "the courts have a function to perform, and they do not think about international relations."

"What we have to do is channel this court action through the international instruments, trying to avoid the deterioration of relations with other countries beyond the strict effect of circumstances," he added.

He justified the government decision to report the possibility of a third attack by saying that "Argentina is a democracy, and the people should know the problems the state is confronting."

Concerning the situation of "repentant" Iranian Manuchehr Motamer, who is in Ecuador, Petrella sais that "the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should find a temporary and then a definitive place of residence for him."

Media Secretary Justifies Government's Warning of Attack

PY1608162594 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1244 GMT 13 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 13 Aug (NA)—On 13 August, Media Secretary Guillermo Seita justified the government's decision to release information on another possible terrorist attack in Argentina. He asserted that, now that they know of the risk, the people "should continue their normal activities because all necessary measures have been taken."

He said: "The executive and legislative branches are functioning normally. The people should work normally because the government has taken all necessary security measures."

Seita added that the government's decision to alert the people to the possibility of another terrorist attack somewhere in the country through four official communiques was "a mature and sensible action" on the part of the government.

Seita, speaking on the radio, explained: "We thought it incumbent upon the government to inform the public with openness and clarity, rather than let rumors spread and let the whole affair snowball."

He stated that the government is convinced that "if the people had learned about a possible attack through rumors they would have been much more concerned."

He added: "Following yesterday's meetings, many people knew about the situation. It was therefore very likely that the information would have leaked out."

Seita reported that another reason for informing the public about this situation was that "citizens would have seen the tighter security measures" adopted by the government at possible targets.

The media secretary stated that for the time being "no further information can be disclosed" on a possible attack for "security reasons."

Asked if the government would issue more communiques, Seita replied that "it is unlikely, although the public will be informed if there are any new developments."

He confirmed—as reported in official communiques on 12 August—that "domestic and international intelligence services" provided the government with the information that was released and that this information was "confirmed by Israeli authorities in Argentina."

Security Tightened in Provinces

PY1608203194 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 0010 GMT 14 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 13 Aug (NA)—The government's warning of a possible terrorist attack in Argentina had a

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domino effect in the provinces. Local authorities gave instructions to increase security measures, especially at Jewish institutions and in border areas.

A climate of calm reigned throughout Argentine on 13 August, even though the government communique issued on 12 August warning of possible terrorist attacks caused great anxiety.

Having received an Interior Ministry report pinpointing the southern area of the Province of Santa Fe as a possible target for another anti-Semitic attack, Governor Carlos Reutemann ordered police reinforcements to Jewish schools, clubs, and institutions.

Reutemann acknowledged having received the intelligence report and confirmed that the Israeli Embassy alerted the Argentine Government to this possibility.

The security operation sought to place special emphasis on greater security on provincial highways and for Israeli and Islamic institutions. Provincial hospitals and health care centers were also placed "on full alert."

On 12 August, Reutemann met with Santa Fe Mayor Jorge Obeid and Rosario Mayor Hector Cavallero to inform them about the situation. The overall climate during the evening became somewhat tense in Rosario when an anonymous caller said an explosive device had been planted at the local Hebrew Society headquarters, which was later evacuated. The Provincial Police Bomb Squad later confirmed it was a false alarm. Activities at the Hebrew Society were therefore resumed.

In the city of San Luis, the federal government's warning prompted more thorough patrolling of the streets and more guards posted at public buildings and Jewish establishments. San Luis Province Governor Adolfo Rodriguez Saa spoke by phone with Interior Minister Carlos Ruckauf. He later met with his cabinet, local security forces commanders, and Daniel Hodara, the president of the Israeli Association in the Province of San Luis.

In Cordoba, security was tighter in the neighborhoods—especially at public buildings—although the Provincial Police reported that no danger signs were detected in the region.

Corrientes Province Governor Raul Romero Feris decided to cancel his visit to the interior of the province. He met with legislators and representatives from Jewish institutions to discuss increased precautions and security measures.

Misiones, Salta, and Chaco provincial authorities also ordered tighter security in cities, especially in border areas.

In the Mendoza Province, Health Minister Hector Wilde reinforced provincial health care centers to provide assistance in case of an emergency. In Entre Rios Province, security was reinforced at infrastructure works that link the province with neighboring countries and other districts.

Police vigilance was especially increased at the "Hernandarias" tunnel, the Salto Grande hydroelectric dam, and the Zarate-Brazo Largo bridge.

In the Patagonia region, security measures were also stepped up following the federal government's warning.

Grand Front Coalition, Communist Party Position Viewed

PY1608222194 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2312 GMT 15 Aug 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 15 Aug (NA)—Various Grand Front leaders pointed out today that the Communist Party [PC] "excluded itself" from the coalition when it decided not to dissolve its structure in order to join the new party that will replace the current center-left alliance.

Deputy Juan Pablo Cafiero said the PC Central Committee decision leaves that party on the sidelines "of the process to create a Grand Front Party." Constituent Convention delegate Carlos Auyero said the PC "excluded itself."

National legislator Graciela Fernandez Meijide said the PC decision "was foreseeable," but "the decision to create a single party has already been made."

Cafiero categorically said that "if political parties do not dissolve their structures, they will stay on the sidelines," adding that "the discussion is closed."

"The decision to join the Grand Front Party depended on the PC," the legislator told NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS, adding: "If they do not dissolve, they cannot join it."

Cafiero said each party in the alliance must "dissolve its structure" and "give signs of continuity and security if we want to create a lasting new structure."

"The PC, as with any other party in the Grand Front, must dissolve its structure or stay out," Cafiero said, admitting his eventual incorporation into the new PC faction Alternative and Liberation, which "may participate as an internal group."

The PC Central Committee decided over the weekend to preserve the party name and structure, thus rejecting the Grand Front Promoting Board call "to join forces in a single party."

The PC Committee vote was divided. Representatives of the PC "orthodox" current headed by Secretary General Patricio Echegaray imposed their decision "not to dissolve" the party, beating the more flexible position promoted by the PC second in command, Alejandro Mosquera.

Auyero agreed with Cafiero, saying: "There are no possibilities of the PC joining the new party as a structured group."

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"The PC decision excludes itself because the Front has already decided to dissolve and create a new party," Auyero said, characterizing the PC Central Committee resolution as "very harsh."

"If the PC does not join the coalition, it means it does not agree with the method or with the idea of creating a single party. They do not accept putting aside their identity and joining a new common identity," Auyero said.

Fernandez Maijide said the decision made by most Communist representatives "was to be expected," adding that "there was a strong reticence" to dissolve the party structure in order to join the new party." [quotation marks as received]

"The PC has all the right in the world" (to adopt that decision), the legislator and national Convention leader said. She added the Promoting Board requirement "was made earlier" to rule out any possible step back.

Sovereignty Over Falklands Incorporated Into Constitution

PY1708001394 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1952 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Santa Fe, 16 Aug (NA) — The recognition of Argentina's sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands will be incorporated into the new constitution through the following clause that was approved by the Drafting Committee:

"The Argentine nation ratifies its legitimate and imprescriptible sovereignty over the Malvinas, South Georgia, and South Sandwich Islands and the corresponding maritime and insular space because they are an integral part of the national territory."

"The recovery of said territories and the full exercising of sovereignty, always respecting the way of life of their inhabitants, in accordance with the principles of international law is a permanent and non-renounceable objective of the Argentine people."

Bolivia

Communique Stresses 'Peaceful Solution' in Haiti

PY1608154394 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 3 Aug 94 p A2

[Text] The Bolivian Government, through its Foreign Ministry, yesterday voiced support for a peaceful solution to the political conflict in Haiti. It failed to express any support for the UN resolution authorizing intervention.

The fifth point of a communique issued yesterday states:

"Regarding UN Security Council Resolution No. 940, we repudiate the de facto regime's refusal to cooperate with current efforts and reiterate the need to exploit every means to find the peaceful solution the international community desires."

Bolivia energetically condemns the illegal regime established in that country and demands the restoration of democracy in Haiti.

Point six of the communique states:

"We appeal to member states to contribute in the restoration of the required level of peace, stability, and personal safety in Haiti that will contribute to peaceful economic and social development with full freedom and democracy."

Foreign Minister Antonio Aranibar earlier said: "Bolivia demands full compliance with the peaceful solutions adopted by international organizations like the OAS General Assembly that was recently held in Brazil."

Paper Notes 'Doubts' About Haiti's Democratization

PY1708015794 La Paz LA RAZON in Spanish 2 Aug 94 p A5

[Editorial: "The Already Decided Invasion of Haiti"]

[Text] The United States has achieved at the United Nations the approval of its much sought after objective of invading Haiti in a just cause—and unobjectionably it is—which is the removal of the coupist military regime and the reinstatement of Jean Baptiste Aristide in the presidency of the nation.

However, and based on many opinions and analyses inside and outside the United States, the main question not convincingly answered by President Bill Clinton's administration is that of the almost abyssal difference prevailing between the radical measure—the medium-term invasion—and its direct beneficiary, Mr. Aristide. This question persists even given the supposition, which does have some basis—and it was thus made understood by the Washington Administration itself—that the goal of the action achieved at the United Nations is to put such strong pressure on the Haitian military commanders, General Raoul Cedras and his command group, that they will be forced to abandon power and thus open some room for the effective democratization of Haiti.

Whatever else one may say, it seems certain that there is a great disproportion not only between means and ends, but between the actions approved by the international community and the relative importance of the country that is the object of such actions. Iraq was one thing, and Haiti is quite another, insofar as applying the same or similar remedies to both is concerned.

Surely, the United States makes its own arguments, and one of them, which is not insignificant, is that which refers to the irrepressible flow of Haitian refugees, who day by day—the situation, although for other causes, is comparable to that posed by Cuba—reach the U.S.

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beaches in the quest no longer of better living opportunities but simply in a desperate attempt for survival. Washington surely believes that somehow solving the internal Haitian situation will stop or at least reduce such a flow.

The U.S. invasion mechanisms are undoubtedly changing. The long-standing U.S. tradition in this respect—namely, in Central America—included, not long ago, the invasion of Grenada by the Reagan administration, and the latest, the invasion of Panama by President Bush, and has always supposed unilateral actions. It is not so now. The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, has worked hard within the UN organization to the point of achieving approval for a possible invasion which would be carried out by the international community.

Within this framework, the prevailing reticence has not caused much surprise, not to say that most Latin American countries have rejected the actions carried out by Washington. The principle of nonintervention and the sovereignty of nations cannot be forgotten. And as was said previously, the direct beneficiary of an invasion, Mr. Aristide, does not deserve, according to most opinions, anything that might imply actions of war or bloodshed, as will inevitably occur in case of an invasion, because his short stay in power is well-remembered, when one of his characteristics was, precisely, his authoritarian, whimsical, and even temerarious government.

Haiti is the poorest country in the American continent, and surely, it is also the weakest institutionally. The doubts prevailing about its democratization, with or without the withdrawal of General Cedras' military officers and with or without the reinstatement of Mr. Aristide, are more than reasonable, and for this reason, also, those doubts referring to the invasion are reasonable.

Brazil

Civilian, Military Servants' Salaries Increased

PY1708041594 Rio de Janeiro Rede Globo Television in Portuguese 2300 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] President Itamar Franco today signed a provisional measure ordering salary adjustments for military and civilian public servants.

The measure marks the first stage of the salary equalization process for public servants of the executive branch. Beginning in September, they will receive salary increases that vary from one category to another. The 122,000 civilian servants listed under table one—who earn basic salaries ranging betweem 103.66 and 608.22 reals—will receive an increase averaging 12.9 percent. The 948,000 servants listed under table two—who earn between 103.66 and 550.75 reals—will receive an increase averaging 16.5 percent. Under this increase, civilian public servants of the executive branch will not earn salaries similar to their colleagues of the legislative or judicial branches, but the salary gap will be reduced by 45 percent.

Military personnel will receive an average increase of 11.3 percent. The second stage of the salary equalization process will be implemented in November following an assessment of the Real Plan.

Cardoso Promises Social Democratic Government

PY1608220094 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 1614 GMT 13 Aug 94

[Report by Vannildo Mendes]

[Text] Brasilia, 13 Aug (AE)—Fernando Henrique Cardoso, presidential candidate of the PSDB-PFL-PTB [Brazilian Social Democracy Party-Liberal Front Party-Brazilian Labor Party], today announced that, if elected, he will try to unite social democracy supporters—who are now dispersed among various parties—under a national project to fight poverty, reduce inequalities, and create jobs. The starting point of the project will be the sending to Congress of a broad constitutional amendment proposing a tax reform and the division of work between the federal, state, and municipal governments.

Sounding like a winner and surrounded by an increasing number of assistants and bodyguards, Cardoso this morning visited a 92-year-old voter at a farm in the satellite town of Planaltina, 40 km from Brasilia. Guiomar Menezes has four children, 14 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren. The last time she voted for president was for Juscelino Kubitschek—40 years ago—after which, disappointed with the political class, she availed herself of the optional voting right of retired workers. Enthusiastic about Fernando Henrique Cardoso, she obtained her new voter's card in Planaltina, and looked for Cardoso's committee. "I trust the Real Plan and I believe Fernando Henrique is a good man," she said. Surrounded by her relatives, Menezes talked with the candidate for 10 minutes, posed for pictures, and won a kiss on her head. "It was one of the happiest days in my life," she said, moved by emotion.

Seeking to moderate enthusiasm over the latest polls, which placed him on top of voters' preferences, Cardoso said that at the right time he will try to form alliances to guarantee a majority in Congress and make the government program feasible. "I must first win the election," he said. Unlike his more optimistic advisers, Cardoso said he is not working on the hypothesis of victory in the first electoral round. He said: "I am not considering this possibility."

Cardoso reacted with indifference to a report that the campaign of his main contender, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, is going through a crisis and that the PT [Workers Party] is looking for new alliances. "He should have thought about that before the election," Cardoso replied, adding that he is not concerned about the PT crisis.

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Cardoso said his only concern is to summon the democratic sectors to tackle Brazil's biggest problems: social inequality, poverty, and unemployment.

"Brazil is today in a situation similar to the period under Juscelino Kubitschek," Cardoso noted, claiming that the country needs a bold development program for building a better future. "Brazil has stumbled over a recession and is off course," the candidate said, advocating the strengthening of Brazilian self-esteem and a collective will to rebuild the country. To pave the way for his development program, he said his first action as president will be to return to the constitutional amendment work through a major amendment bill to be proposed by the executive branch. This bill will include a tax reform and the redistribution of revenues and duties—which today are too concentrated in the Union—to state and municipal governments. "We will try a new, more sound and more just federal pact," he said.

Bolivian President Visits 'To Save' Gas Contract

PY1708010694 Sao Paulo AGENCIA ESTADO in Portuguese 1908 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Brasilia, 16 Aug (AE)—The contract that the Brazilian and Bolivian governments signed 18 months ago for construction of a gas pipeline between the two countries will expire at midnight tomorrow. Early today, Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada and his Brazilian counterpart, Itamar Franco, met in an effort to reach on agreement on the financing of the project. A short time ago, Sanchez de Lozada talked with the press. He said the two countries need to reach a financial agreemment by tomorrow. The agreement has not yet been reached and "all of us are to blame for it," he said. The main problem is the lack of equitable participation in the contract between Petrobras [Brazilian Petroleum Corporation] and YPFB [Bolivian Government Oil Deposits]. YPFB participation in the project amounts to only 4 percent, which Lozada said he wants to increase to 49 percent, leaving 51 percent to Petrobras. "Bolivia has the gas and Brazil has the market," he claimed. He added that Brazil has not defined the number of potential gas consumers, and that under this condition, it is impossible to establish a price. Even so, Lozada said he believes an agreement will be reached tomorrow, when the two presidents will meet again. "The objective of my visit to Brazil is to save the contract," Lozada said.

Chile

Factors That 'Discourage' Force in Haiti Viewed

PY1708012594 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 7 Aug 94 p A3

[Editorial: "Intervention in Haiti"]

[Text] The UN Security Council has taken a decisive step toward the invasion of Haiti. The UN resolution calls for the organization of an international contingent to militarily occupy the Caribbean nation. This resolution was requested by President Clinton following the failure of diplomatic efforts to reinstate President Aristide.

The lofty objective of creating conditions for democracy is facing in this case obstacles of international law and of practical order. Both obstacles can be costly for the community of nations and for the Haitian people.

The use of force is an exceptional measure to restore the state of law. This is so contemplated in the UN Charter, which bans the use of force except in cases of aggression or the disruption of peace. It is rather difficult to argue that the situation in said nation, the poorest and most isolated in the continent, will justify such causes and a military action. The UN Security Council resolution is, therefore, of doubtful legality and sets a precedent that weakens the principle of peaceful solution of conflicts, a basic principle for international coexistence and for the sovereignty of nations.

Notwithstanding the legal considerations there are reasons for coexistence which discourage the use of force in Haiti. The UN decision emerges at a time of strong criticism of President Bill Clinton's foreign policy. The failures of interventions in Somalia and Bosnia, the indecision in relations with Russia and China, and the stagnation in trade negotiations with Japan show weaknesses in the U.S. President's foreign policy. To this must be added the aspirations of Afro-American organizations to influence international decisions. This explains the considerable pressure posed by black congressmen to act in Africa and in Haiti. Thus, the intervention emerges from the U.S. internal needs and not from the foreign policy needs. It is for this reason that the U.S. President had declared the option for the unilateral use of force in any case, even if he did not receive the UN support.

In analyzing the convenience of joining the military forces for the invasion and occupation, the results of that action cannot be omitted. No one believes that the occupation of the Haitian territory might pose some problems. The disproportion between the occupation forces and those of the invaded territory makes us believe that there will be no resistance. But later reactions of nationalist sectors are capable not only of increasing violence but of affecting the adherence to democracy and the state of law. It is natural that foreign imposition of government officials and of government formulas might create opposition and might bring into question the legitimacy of the officials.

The UN resolution to invade Haiti contradicts positions continuously defended by Latin America. The region has always maintained that such an instrument is only appropriate in cases of legitimate defense and of threat to or the disruption of peace. To support a military incursion without solid legal bases poses a dangerous precedent and divides the Latin American countries.

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This was correctly pointed out by the Brazilian representative at the UN Security Council voting.

The U.S. request and the cooperation between governments must respect the pinciples of international law and the essential elements of state sovereignty. At the same time, account must be taken of the fact that foreign intervention promotes violence and prevents conclusion of internal agreements, which are the only ones capable of creating stability and respect for the state of law.

Possible Resumption of Ties With Bolivia Denied

PY1608215894 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0012 GMT 12 Aug 94

[Excerpt] Santiago, 12 Aug (EFE)—Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Jose Miguel Insulza on 12 August officially and categorically denied reports from La Paz on a possible resumption of diplomatic relations between Chile and Bolivia in 1996.

Returning today to Santiago from Bolivia, Insulza told EFE the subject was not discussed during the meeting with his Bolivian counterpart.

The Chilean under secretary said they only discussed the previously agreed agenda, bilateral issues, and prepared for the meeting President Eduardo Frei will hold with his Bolivian counterpart Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada within the framework of the Rio Group "summit" next September in Brazil.

According to a press report from La Paz, diplomatic sources reported that the governments of Bolivia and Chile agreed to 1996 as the year for the resumption of diplomatic relations.

Insulza said current relations between Chile and Bolivia are on "a very positive level," but added that this cannot be interpreted as grounds for the resumption of ties or the designation of ambassadors. [passage omitted]

Slowness of Justice System Examined

94SM0428A Santiago LA NACION in Spanish 13 Jun 94 pp 8-9

[Article by Francisco Artaza]

[Text] Justice is slow, but it arrives, goes the saying. But in Chile, it is slower than it should be, because the justice system is absolutely overloaded. About 9,000 new cases reach each of Santiago's courts annually. Of these, more than 55 percent do not even reach the judge. And the others will take an average of two years to complete.

This is without doubt one of the great evils of the national justice system. And Chileans, who for whatever reason have suffered long, tedious court trials, can testify to it.

"Slowness in the administration of justice contributes to creating a feeling of impunity among people. Justice is not effective if it is slow," said the lawyer from the Council for State Defense, Davor Harasic.

In 1992, to cite an example that is repeated year after year, the criminal courts processed 694,830 cases. Of them, 440,218 were completed and 254,612 cases remained pending.

"Over time, an accumulation of pending cases has been building up. This is a growing symptom that the administration of justice has been becoming slower; therefore, the cost to plaintiffs has increased, discouraging law suits," warned professor and researcher Jose Yanez, of the University of Chile, in one of his articles published by CPU [expansion unknown] in the book *Proposal for Judicial Training, Education, Improvement and Policy.*

Despite the importance of the subject, only during the last two years have systematic efforts begun, although sporadically, to quantify the situation in which the justice system finds itself and, in particular, its effect on the time it takes to administer justice. These attempts at planning have even had to deal with apprehensions among the senior members of the judicial system.

Most of these statistical studies have been conducted by the Administrative Corporation of the Judicial Branch, in cooperation with universities. Beginning with these studies, it has been possible since 1991 to formulate a ranking of courts, according to number of cases admitted and completed, and the speed of their processing, which has permitted the Supreme Court to better evaluate justice officials, and the Ministry of Justice to obtain the necessary tools to study the needs of the justice system.

According to these studies, a criminal trial lasts an average of 573 days. Simple cases, such as drunkenness or alcohol violations (which overload the criminal courts), are resolved in not less than 71 days, while more complicated cases have taken more than seven years. To this, the time that the Supreme Court takes must be added! (See table) [not published].

In Santiago, for reasons that have not been determined, the process is even slower. The average time needed to complete a criminal case is 739 days, a little more than two years.

Whose Fault is It?

But this delay is not only the fault of the courts.

According to the law, the president of the Supreme Court is ultimately responsible for the movement of cases through the justice system, and for their resolution. However, the Courts of Appeals also have direct responsibility for overseeing the work of the courts in their jurisdiction.

But, as law professor Juan Vrsalovic Mihoevic explained, "the flow (of cases through the courts) depends on external factors that affect their operations. They have been grouped into legal, institutional, and social factors. Along with these factors are others of an

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internal nature, such as the education, experience, and diligence of all the persons in the system who take part in the process, their salaries and employment system, the customs and usages, plus the available physical infrastructure."

At the moment, a series of reforms is being discussed in Congress that, through legal changes and the creation of possibilities for the training and education of judicial employees, could speed up the administration of justice to some degree.

Nevertheless, some jurists say that there will be no solution to the slowness in the Chilean justice system as long as the archaic written process, based entirely on the record and that we inherited from the Spanish colonial period, is not definitively replaced by the spoken or oral trial.

There is no doubt in the judicial system that the spoken trial is the ideal, as it permits a closer relationship between litigants and judges, and results in more expeditious trials. But because of its higher costs, beyond the possibilities of the Chilean situation, they prefer to devote their efforts to improving the current system. "If you have no money to buy a new house, the only course remaining if you want to live well is to clean up and repair as much as possible the old house where you are living," said a Santiago Appeals Court judge.

But it is not easy to do. Especially if it is necessary to speed up and improve the work performed by all the institutions that collaborate with the judges for the administration of justice.

In a judicial investigation, the magistrate, besides relying on the police, often solicits information from the Civil Registration and Identification Service, the Legal Medical Service, Public Welfare, hospitals, the Gendarmerie of Chile, the National Bankruptcy Court, the Internal Revenue Service, the National Service for Minors, and even special experts. Each of these agencies can take from one to three months to reply.

"When a magistrate requires expertise at some location where he must hold a hearing, he cannot do so with complete freedom if he needs the advice of experts because, due to their number, the roles are reversed and it is they who determine the day and the hour with the judge to order an inspection or reorganization, as their time permits," said the president of the Sixth Criminal Court of San Miguel, magistrate Juan Manuel Escandon, in an article collected by the CPU.

[Box, p 9]

Internal Obstacles

More than 4,290 persons are employed in the judicial branch. Of these, 1,137 belong to the first category of personnel, which includes judges of the Supreme Court, the Appeals Courts, and court judges and secretaries. Then come the auxiliary officials. There are 158 positions for social workers, 233 persons of professional status and 2,962 positions in the employees' category.

Because of the work overload, judges are forced to delegate duties to secretariat employees, personnel who generally lack the necessary skills. "These are people who did not need any special knowledge to enter (the judicial branch), they have no skills and therefore they find in the judicial branch an opportunity to do office work for which they would have difficulty being accepted in the private sector. Although their work requires it, they have no aptitude for typing or writing, nor can they spell," said magistrate Juan Manuel Escandon in his article.

With low salaries, without official career status, with no training or chances for improvement, and too much work, it is natural that the performance of these employees also contributes to slowness in the administration of justice.

The lawyer, Davor Harasic, points out in the interest of fairness that neither are the judges qualified to administer the operation of the courts or to undertake a substantial modernization of the justice system. "There are courts in Santiago that have been equipped with computer systems that have not produced results because the judges themselves resist using them," he said.

Davor Harasic also explained that the secretaries of the courts, who are also lawyers, are "underutilized" in administrative roles, when they could assume duties as case investigators.

Many believe that this is the germ of an idea that would provide for an investigative judge and a sentencing judge, thus increasing the procedural guarantees for those being prosecuted.

The problem is so complicated that many members of the judiciary consider it unresolvable. But at the same time, they glimpse a hope: by attacking simultaneously all of the factors involved, it is possible that justice might arrive on time.

Colombia

'Narcocassette' Probe Ends; Candidates Cleared

PA1708010394 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Report by J.J. Pinilla from the "National Newscast"]

[Text] The narcocassettes scandal has turned up nothing. Prosecutor General Gustavo de Greiff today announced the results of the investigations: No one has been implicated; nothing was clarified; we will never know what happened; no one has been charged; and no one will have to respond to anything.

Two months after the beginning of one of the worst scandals in our nation's political life—the scandal over

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the so-called narcocassettes—the Prosecutor General's Office today officially confirmed that there is no evidence involving the campaigns of presidential candidates Ernesto Samper Pizano and Andres Pastrana Arango.

Prosecutor General Gustavo de Greiff also pointed out that he is not at all interested in the opinion of the United States concerning the affair, and he added that the dossier is open to anyone who wants to see it.

[Begin recording] [De Greiff] We investigated checking accounts, bookkeeping ledgers, and other records of the presidential campaigns and the people linked to them, and we did not find that any money of doubtful origin was used in the campaigns.

[Unidentified reporter] How about the cassette tapes?

[De Greiff] The tapes were illegally recorded, because no authority ever ordered the phone taps.

[Reporter] Sir, are you not concerned about the U.S. response, considering the United States is following these investigations very closely?

[De Greiff] I am not worried, because if the United States wants to review the dossier, it is open for examination. It will then be seen we did everything necessary to determine whether money of doubtful origin had been used in the presidential campaigns. Fortunately, it turned out that none of the campaigns received such money. [end recording]

This ruling by the Prosecutor General's Office is final. There is no mechanism that will allow the reopening of the investigation.

Cali Police Declare Emergency Over Cartel Money

PA1608173094 Santa Fe de Bogota Emisoras Caracol Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 15 Aug 94

[From "Caracol's 0600 to 0900" newscast]

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota—Defense Minister Fernando Botero's decision to declare a 60-day police emergency for the Cali police force over the alleged infiltration of drug trafficking in the institution has drawn reaction from several Colombian political personalities.

The general reorganization of the Cali Police through the dismissal of 36 officers, 18 noncommissioned officers, and four members of the metropolitan police is the preliminary result of an investigation into corruption related to drug trafficking.

The minister said the measure is intended to purge the institution of infiltration by Cali Cartel money. Throughout this crisis, however, generalizations have been made that harm the prestige and honor of the Police, he said. The institution's great sacrifice in fighting drug trafficking should not be overlooked, the minister said.

President Appoints Key Policy Advisers

PA1608190194 Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 11 Aug 94 p 1-B

[Report by Gilda Sarmiento]

[Text] In their interest in the ministries, many people forgot about the presidential advisers, who will handle the power behind the throne.

More than advisers, they are viewed as superministers. In their empire, policies will be designed for the country's key issues. In that sense, they are the president's men.

They will be in charge of defense and national security, human rights, economy and competitiveness, social policy, international affairs, state modernization, communications, and matters concerning Santa Fe de Bogota.

Luis Bernardo Florez will be economic affairs adviser, a position that already existed, which now will also handle competitiveness.

The position of adviser for youth, women, and family has been eliminated and replaced with an adviser for social policy, to which Blanca Isabel Martinez was appointed.

Juan Fernando Cristo and Monica De Greiff will handle communications and international affairs, respectively.

Vicente de Roux, the only adviser already confirmed in his post, will be in charge of the controversial human rights policy, and Sonia Duran de Infante was appointed new adviser for Santa Fe de Bogota, a city with which the president has a debt. The votes he received in the capital practically decided his entrance to the Narino Palace.

Jorge Mario Eastman Londono will head the struggle against corruption and the campaign to moralize public administration, which is the second phase in state modernization.

There is no doubt that under President Ernesto Samper, the advisers' empire has consolidated.

[Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish on 11 August on page 6-A publishes a 100-word report on President Samper's appointment of Juan Posada Garcia-Pena as deputy government minister and Diana Constanza Fajardo Rivera secretary general of the Government Ministry]

Armed Forces Deny Links to Politician's Murder

PA1708035694 Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 11 Aug 94 p 6A

[Communique issued by the General Command of the Armed Forces; place and date not given]

[Text] The General Command of the Armed Forces; the commanders of the Army, Navy, and Air Force; and the

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general director of the National Police hereby state before the general public that they regret and strongly condemn the murder of Mr. Manuel Cepeda Vargas by unidentified individuals. Likewise, the commanders hereby advise that State Security Organizations are conducting joint intelligence operations in an attempt to clarify the details of this criminal act, which adversely affects the peace desired by all Colombians.

The commanders strongly and unanimously object to the ill-intentioned accusations and charges certain people and organizations have made to the media. Such allegations present the Armed Forces as the mastermind and perpetrator of this deplorable crime and of leading a plan to exterminate the heads of left-wing organizations. These allegations are designed to engender uncertainty, tension, and retaliation for an act that has brought grief to all Colombians.

The military commanders are taking this opportunity to reiterate before the public that the Colombian Government and its Armed Forces have always sought to provide all political groups with the security and support necessary to guarantee their personal safety and their right to express and practice their ideology and political beliefs.

Government Minister Cited on Peace Talks

PA1708032594 Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 12 Aug 94 p 6A

[Excerpt] Government Minister Horacio Serpa Uribe yesterday admitted that Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas's murder was "a very harsh blow" to the reconciliation process. He said this abominable crime does not contribute anything to the climate of understanding and patriotism that must surround the road toward peace.

Concerning the requests made by several political and social sectors in the country for the executive branch to immediately open a dialogue with the rebels, Serpa Uribe told EL ESPECTADOR: "This is not an unilateral decision. The government wants to explore the possibility of having a useful dialogue through a process that has yet to take place but which we hope to achieve. Meanwhile, the rebels must clearly be willing to reach a national agreement."

Serpa Uribe made these statements at the funeral of murdered Senator Manuel Cepeda Vargas.

The high-ranking official reasserted that violence will not bring us closer to peace but, rather, will generate more violence. He also admitted that the attainment of peace is somewhat complicated.

In denouncing the senator's murder, Serpa Uribe asserted that this "monstrous criminal act can only come from minds that oppose reconciliation." He also said the guerrillas must assume a position of understanding and make openings for peace.

Regarding the comments made by retired military officers on Serpa's talks with Francisco Caraballo [Popular Liberation Army rebel leader], the minister replied that it is necessary to explore opportunities for peace and that he did not want to argue with his critics, because he believes he acted correctly and that those meetings have not negatively affected the country's integrity in any way.

The government minister also said the government rejects any form of private justice, such as paramilitary groups. [passage omitted]

Ecuador

'Repentant' Iranian Remains in Protective Custody

PA1708031294 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2130 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Quito, 16 Aug (DPA)—The risk of the killing or kidnapping of the "repentant" Iranian Manuchehr Motamer by agents of Teheran's Islamic regime has not been overlooked by the Ecuadoran Government or by the UNHCR [UN High Commissioner for Refugees].

"That is correct," Foreign Minister Diego Paredes said this morning when asked if there is fear that Motamer may be killed or kidnapped.

"There have been attempts against Motamer and his family," the Ecuadoran foreign minister said in statements to a local television station.

Motamer, who is the main informer in the 18 July bloody terrorist attack in Buenos Aires against a Jewish organization, "is, for the time being, safe where he is," and remains in the protective custody of the Ecuadoran Government and UNHCR, the foreign minister added.

The Iranian, described as a "vulgar impostor" by the government of his country, arrived in Quito on 25 July after escaping a kidnap attempt in Caracas. At the request of the UNHCR, Ecuador granted him political refugee status.

Foreign Minister Paredes criticized the fact that Motamer's whereabouts were disclosed in Buenos Aires. "His safety depends on secrecy," Paredes said when announcing that the Iranian will remain in Quito indefinitely.

Motamer showed up at the Argentine Embassy in Quito on 11 August to reassert his charges regarding the participation of Iranian diplomats in the attack in Buenos Aires that left approximately 100 people dead. Motamer also offered to give additional details in terms of his charges. This has yet to be done, however, at least not publicly.

Paraguay

Wasmosy Calls for Respect of Court Decisions

PY1608201794 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 16 Aug 94 p 4

[Text] President Juan Carlos Wasmosy yesterday labelled opposition leaders who "go around embassies

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airing our national problems" as "old legionnaires" [those at the service of foreign powers]. Wasmosy challenged the opposition "to show a bit of nationalism, not a legionnaire attitude" in their attempt to solve the Council of Magistrates problem. He called opposition leaders "false democrats," adding that he is the president of all Paraguayans even though he was elected by "the vote of the glorious Colorado Party." He said he will ensure that the Constitution is respected.

The president said: "I can assure you we will be firm, not just at respecting the Constitution, but also in ensuring that others respect it." He added that he will ensure the institutions are respected because "there are false democrats who want to try justices when courts rule against their interests. They dress like democrats, organize demonstrations, and go around the embassies airing our national problems like old legionnaires." The president made these remarks during a reception of Colorado Party followers residing in Buenos Aires.

Wasmosy said: "We support the idea of resolving our domestic problems at home," adding that each ministry has very clear goals and that his government program is being strictly fulfilled." [closing quotation mark as published]. The president then admitted the existence of a problem with the Council of Magistrates. He said: "I want you to know we ardently want to renew the Paraguayan system of justice. It is not the government that has been placing obstacles in the way by annulling laws and objecting from the very beginning."

The president recalled that we live in a democracy. We cannot accuse a group of lawyers just because they demand justice. The president recommended: "We must respect Supreme Court decisions, on the petition of the lawyers as well as on the call to elections."

Wasmosy said he does not want a justice system dominated by the opposition "or by us, but a clear, transparent, justice system with honest men serving it."

"We are ready for today's meeting (there is another meeting with the opposition at 1500 today to continue to discuss the problem of the Council of Magistrates). We are ready to sit and discuss what can be done. I challenge the opposition to show their nationalism and drop this legionnaire attitude," the president said. He added that most people in the country support his government: "This is why today I am the president of all Paraguayans, through the vote of the glorious Colorado Party."

Peru

Daily Views Need To Avoid Invasion of Haiti

PY1608173294 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 2 Aug 94 p A2

[Editorial: "A Serious Decision on Haiti"]

[Text] The UN Security Council's decision to authorize the use of military force against Haiti is a serious decision. The corresponding resolution was sponsored by the United States, Argentina, Canada, and France. It was approved by 12 votes to zero, with the abstention of Brazil and China. It has given the Pentagon the green light to carry out unthinkable military actions to restore ousted President Jean Bertrand Aristides to power.

An invading force—technically different from an interventionist force—would involve U.S. troops that would only report to Washington. This in practice means a "multinational force" would be formed, but it would report to a "centralized control." This move grants the White House obvious powers.

This force is empowered to use "all necessary means" to oust General Raoul Cedras. What does that phrase mean? It is hard to define for the time being, but on the basis of previous cases like Santo Domingo in 1965, Grenada in 1983, and the Persian Gulf in 1990, the U.S. Marines will probably use exhaustive military resources—in this case probably conventional methods—to gain control of Port-au-Prince and the rest of Haitian territory.

Undoubtedly, as international media analysts have noted, to invade the island is not a complicated military task. For the first world power it would be a little more than a training maneuver, although the possibility of casualties among U.S. troops cannot be ruled out.

The participation of third country units and troops in this force is merely figurative. In Grenada, for example, there was a very scarce participation; even in the case of the Gulf War the sophisticated U.S. military technology was enough, despite the fact that the allies also had highly sophisticated weapons. So, the main problem is not the military aspect but rather a matter of principles and politics.

First, the Haitian crisis is by no means new. [Jean-Claude] Duvalier's dictatorship ruled from the 1950's until the elimination of the so-called "Tontons Macoutes" and the spread of institutional chaos. The Haitian people—who have always upheld freedom—have experienced complex and painful domestic situations due to government oppression and material misery; so much so that Haiti is currently regarded the most backward country in the entire American continent.

President Aristides was elected democratically, within the limitations of the island's political system and was then ousted by a military dictatorship that, under the pressure of the international community, established a virtual puppet government headed by former Judge Emile Jonassaint.

But it is also true that Aristides, a former seminarist with an unclear political background, assumed stances that did not match his own democratic rhetoric. He once stated, to the amazement of the international media, that he would endorse cruel punishment for his opponents.

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It is hard to know what will happen after the military invasion because Aristides is not, and cannot be, considered a guarantee for political stability in Haiti. Somalia, where a military intervention has not solved the institutional crisis, is a good recent example of a similar situation.

Moreover, military intervention is not acceptable from a doctrinal viewpoint and from the viewpoint of international law. The international blockade against Cedras has not been at all positive. It only helped burden even more the civilians who live in the uncertainty which is reflected, among other things, by a massive exodus under pitiful conditions to the United States and other neighboring countries.

The efforts by the OAS have also been ineffective. First, because they lacked the required decision and political strength and the consensus of the continent. Second, there was an absence of necessary diplomatic pressure following the attacks against missions sent to Port-au-Prince to break the political stagnation.

Within this context, the UN resolution is delicate. Of course, nobody can defend Cedras and his followers because that would be absurd; but it is very dangerous to establish a precedent for a military invasion within our continent.

Among the few tools available to small, poor countries to defend themselves are the principles of noninterference and nonintervention; therefore, to become carried away by antidictator feelings over Haiti may cloud a fair assessment of such a delicate international issue as this.

Moreover, Haiti's case is being resolved within the United Nations where the participation of powers that do not belong to the region complicates the adoption of an adequate solution. This is also a matter of concern.

It is hoped that the current circumstances will help end the oppressive Port-au-Prince regime with its rebellious attitude that can only bring greater harm to the Haitian people. In view of the possible invasion, an ultimatum may be established in compliance with international law to allow the OAS to recover the protagonist role it previously played.

The OAS statutes clearly state that an urgent meeting of foreign ministers may be summoned to try to seek a political solution, to prevent an invasion from taking place—which would establish a negative precedent—and to negotiate a solution to this aspect of the crisis.

Peru must not support the use of force to solve the problem of third countries. There may still be time to resort to diplomacy and peaceful efforts. Democracy must, of course, be strongly defended but the urgent issue is to prevent military intervention.

First Lady Seeks Guarantees in Bribery Case

PY1608194794 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0003 GMT 13 Aug 94

[Text] Lima, 12 Aug (EFE)—Peruvian First Lady Susana Higuchi today leveled new charges against her husband's government. She said there are no guarantees over disclosing details of a bribery case involving one of President Alberto Fujimori's former ministers.

One of Higuchi's spokesmen told Radioprogramas del Peru that she has decided to not disclose details of a case of corruption "until she receives guarantees."

Mrs. Fujimori was consulted by the radio station shortly after Efrain Goldenberg, president of the council of ministers and Peruvian foreign minister, stated today that "nobody can accuse this government of protecting corruption." Commenting on what Susana Fujimori told an opposition weekly, Goldenberg said: "Charges must be concrete and documented." Mrs. Fujimori told the weekly that she turned down a bribe offered to her to get the government to approve a project that was later approved by a former Fujimori minister. She refused, however, to disclose the minister's name or other details of the case.

Susana Higuchi caused a heated debated following her alleged decision to compete with her husband in the 1995 presidential elections, according to information disclosed by a legislator who confirmed she asked him to be her ticket mate. Fujimori's opposition to this caused marital conflict and their consequent separation, although they both assert they have never talked of divorce.

Alleged Ruling Favoring First Lady Called 'False'

PY1608140094 Lima Global de Television Network in Spanish 0130 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Excerpts] It is not true that the court has ruled in favor of the first lady of the nation and against the National Election Board [JNE], as some sectors of the media reported today.

Judge Beatriz Melgarejo herself verified that a resolution in this sense is false, and that the court ordered quite the opposite.

The JNE issued a communique voicing concern over the forging of a document.

According to some newspapers today, the petition filed last week on behalf of the first lady of the nation, Susan Iguchi, and against the JNE was accepted by the Lima Penal Court. This information, however, was denied a few hours ago by Judge Beatriz Melgarejo Cayetano, who said that the copy of the resolution faxed to the media is false. [passage omitted]

The grounds for the petition is that the JNE is threatening and violating Susana Iguchi de Fujimori's individual rights. [passage omitted]

The dissemination of this forged resolution prompted an immediate reaction by JNE members, who denied its contents by showing the media a copy of the original resolution declaring the petition inapplicable. [passage omitted]

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Venezuela

Peasants Seize Mexican Embassy in Caracas

PA1608232294 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2305 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Caracas, 16 Aug (NOTIMEX)—Diplomatic sources report that the Mexican Embassy in Caracas was seized today by a group of peasants from the state of Aragua, located in central Venezuela, who are demanding the government resolve agricultural problems.

Venezuelan Foreign Ministry sources have confirmed authorities have already opened negotiations with the peasants who seized the embassy, but they would not disclose the issues being discussed.

Officials Talk With Peasants

PA1708030894 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0232 GMT 17 Aug 94

[Text] Caracas, 16 Aug (NOTIMEX)—Venezuelan Foreign Ministry officials are talking tonight to the approximately 40 peasants who peacefully occupied the Mexican Embassy in Caracas today. The authorities are trying to convince the peasants to leave the embassy.

Hours after the occupation of the embassy, which is located in the southwestern sector of Caracas, spokespersons for the Foreign Ministry stated that the peasants and embassy personnel are fine, that "all is calm, and that the occupation had been done peacefully."

They were unable to say, however, when the 40 peasants from Aragua State will leave the embassy. The peasants are demanding the legalization of the land they have.

According to the sources, Mexican Charge d'Affairs Juan Manuel Nungaray and Edmundo Gonzalez, chief of protocol of the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry, are heading the talks.

Venezuelan Deputy Foreign Minister Roy Matos Chardetton visited the embassy this evening. He said he had been there "to see what was happening."

The Mexican Embassy is being guarded by a group of Directorate of Intelligence and Prevention Services (DISIP—political police) agents who are saying nothing about the incident.

A Foreign Ministry spokesperson added the group of peasants is allegedly led by Alberto Lozano, former presidential candidate nominated by an independent movement in the December elections, but this statement has yet to be confirmed.

Peasants Leave Embassy After Agreement

PA1708141294 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0607 GMT 17 Aug 94

[Report by Hugo Sergio del Aguila]

[Excerpt] Caracas, 17 Aug—Early this morning, representatives from more than 3,600 Venezuelan peasant families of Aragua State left the Mexican Embassy in Caracas, which they had peacefully occupied for over 12 hours.

Juan Manuel Nungaray, charge d'affaires of the Mexican Embassy, issued a communique in which he explained that 36 Venezuelans came to this embassy to request being heard on their problems. Nungaray said that the group's problems do not concern Mexico, but the embassy assisted the group in contacting the Veneuelan authorities with whom the occupants reached an agreement after several hours of dialogue.

Alberto Solano, the peasants' lawyer, said that the action was taken because Aragua Governor Carlos Tablantes had trampled on the peasants' rights, and their homes had been destroyed by a fire provoked by policemen. Solano added the state authorities had disobeyed the ruling of a judge who determined that the peasants had rightfully purchased the 86 hectares that they have occupied for several years in Juete.

The lawyer added that the 3,600 families had established a community there, which they called Hugo Chavez Frias in honor of the retired military officer who in February 1992 rebelled against the government of Carlos Andres Perez. The police and local authorities are harassing the peasants, Solano emphasized, because the community belongs to the Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement 200 (MBR-200), a group led by Chavez Frias.

Solano pointed out that the peasants "decided to take over the Mexican Embassy as a means of voicing their solidarity with the indians of the southern state of Chiapas, who are waging a very similar struggle for their land." [passage omitted]

Government Favors UN Mediation in Haitian Crisis

PA1608233994 Paris AFP in Spanish 2153 GMT 16 Aug 94

[Text] Caracas, 16 Aug (AFP)—The Venezuelan Government has given its support to the initiative promoted by UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali to find a negotiated settlement to the Haitian crisis, according to a Foreign Ministry communique published today in Caracas.

Venezuela had been promoting an initiative in which Latin American diplomats would have sought a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Haiti to prevent military intervention. This initiative, however, faced some initial difficulties and was overshadowed by Butrus-Ghali's subsequent decision to mediate in the crisis.

In fact, in its 16 August communique the Venezuelan Foreign Ministry implies that its initiative has been terminated, saying that "in supporting the UN secretary general's gesture, Venezuela recognizes the honorable position of other Latin American nations that supported

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the original plan and had expressed willingness to participate in the proposed political and diplomatic mission."

The Venezuelan Foreign Ministry mentioned Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Uruguay among those countries that had been willing to take part in the mission.

"The Venezuelan Government wishes the UN secretary general great success in his new efforts, which reflect a desire to serve mankind and to respect the people's sovereignty," the communique concluded.

Caldera Cited on Implementing Exchange Control

PA1608222494 Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 14 Aug 94 p D-2

[Text] President Rafael Caldera has said implementation of the exchange control is not intended to take dollars away from the Venezuelans who need them. The control is to avoid the flight of capital, which was endangering the country's economic prospects.

He has said the beginning of an administration, such as the current one governing Venezuela, is always difficult, given the establishment of new rules; therefore, the government has a special interest in the Foreign Exchange Administration Board being comprised by honorable and wise individuals. Although there were certain difficulties in the beginning, these problems are being solved, he has said.

He has said the appointment of Luis Matos Azucar as president of the Foreign Exchange Administration Board had been well received not only by the general public and the interested sectors but also by the remainder of the members of the board.

"I must recognize Ivan Pulido Mora's merits and qualities. He has expressed to me his willingness to leave this post, an act which I consider appropriate. He has told me of his points of view, and during that conversation, which was very cordial, I decided to replace him by Luis Matos Azucar, who has the advantage of not having constant ties with the Foreign Exchange Administration Board and the government of the Republic," Caldera has said.

Regarding a possible shortage of supplies due to the lack of currency granted to the industrial and manufacturing sector to purchase supplies and raw materials, as reiterated on several occasions by representatives of that sector, the president has said the executive has been considering this statement very carefully. All efforts have been geared toward the prevention of a shortage of supplies in the country, and he has said "this shortage has not occurred up until now and will not occur."

Caldera has assured the possibility of a dual exchange system is merely speculation derived from absolutely unfounded rumors. He added "this speculation must be the product of someone interested in the establishment of such a system. They spread the rumor and then attribute the idea to someone in the government, which has never even thought about it."

We are convinced a dual exchange system would have been of no use, the president has said, given the situation in the country and the manner in which the emergency measures had to be taken. It probably would have been worse.

The chief of state did not comment on the increase in gasoline prices, although it has been expected since the first months of the year.

Roundup of Economic Developments

PA1708015694

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on Venezuelan economic developments monitored through 16 August.

The average Venezuelan's consumption of food has shifted in the last few months toward family basket products (flour, cooking oil, rice, sugar, milk, and others), laying aside nonessential goods. Ernesto d'Abreu, National Supermarkets Association president, has said increases in prices and the people's low purchasing power have made the average food demand decrease by 22 to 25 percent. He also said the recent taxes on wholesale and luxury items have cast many doubts, especially at the supermarket level, because it has not been specified which goods are taxed and which are not. (Caracas REPORTE DE LA ECONOMIA in Spanish 9 Aug 94 p 17)

Venezuela will become the most competitive nation in aluminum prices beginning in December 1994, because its production cost is estimated to be under $1,000 per metric ton. The Venezuelan aluminum industry, which reported losses during the last three years, has recovered since November 1993. Maria Elena Posada, Venealum president, has said the future of aluminum looks favorable, because aluminum producers have agreed to reduce supply by approximately 2 million metric tons. (Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 10 Aug 94)

A Finance Ministry spokesman reported today the Venezuelan Government will ask France to loan $500 million to refinance the foreign debt payments that are due this year, adding Venezuela expects to reduce its foreign debt by $1 billion. (Madrid EFE in Spanish 1531 GMT 9 Aug 94)

Energy and Mines Minister Erwin Arrieta has reported that the process to transform the public transportation sector from the use of gasoline to the use of natural gas could take 30 months. By switching the public transportation system from gasoline to natural gas, we are attempting to prevent consumers from paying the increases in fuel prices, Arrieta has said. (Caracas ECONOMIA HOY in Spanish 10 Aug 94 p 9)

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June's inflation rate was 9.2 percent, and the accumulated inflation rate for 1994 is now 29.5 percent. According to figures released by the Central Statistics and Data Processing Office, OCEI, the consumer price index reached 32 percent in the western region, 31.8 percent in the Andean region, and 31.3 percent in the region of Los Llanos. The prices of the transportation and communication sectors increased by 38.7 percent, and the prices of food, beverages, and tobacco increased by 32.9 percent. (Caracas EL GLOBO in Spanish 10 Aug 94 p 13)

The interest rate fell by 11.75 percent as the issuing institute auctioned zero coupon bonds on 10 August, and the value of money dropped 56.75 percent. Experts have warned this fall will prompt an increase in the consumer price index. (Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Aug 94)

OCEI Director Edgar Paredes Pisani reported today Venezuelan traditional exports increased by 4.8 percent in July, adding precious metals and gold exports amounted to $300 million, although nonpetroleum exports did not increase much. Aggregate nontraditional exports amounted to $2.273 billion during the January-June period, 18.3 percent more than the previous year. Venezuela has exported $565 million to the United States and $564 million to Colombia so far in 1994. Paredes said the private sector exported 65.1 percent of goods. (Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2058 GMT 11 Aug 94)

Aurelio Concheso, a member of the Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, FEDECAMARAS, Board of Directors, has commented on the announcement made by the National Council of Commerce and Services, Consecomercio, that the unemployment rate could reach 13 percent in 1994; that the economic situation is forcing businesses to lower their operation costs; and that the country's economic, political, and juridical situations are triggering a reduction in production. He has said the existing single and inflexible exchange control system is "suffocating production, and far from solving the capital flight problem, it is diminishing production in Venezuela, thereby adversely affecting employment." He has warned of the danger of imposing absolute exchange controls, which could restrain production, and he urged the Foreign Exchange Administration Board to expedite the process to approve foreign exchange requests. He has objected to the government controlling imports of powdered milk. (Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 11 Aug 94)

Luis Giusti, Venezuelan Petroleum, Inc., PDVSA, president, has explained to the Senate Economic Commission that the oil industry will lose 250 billion bolivares in 1994 due to the exchange control system, because additional bolivares are needed to pay off PDVSA's debt, which amounts to $4.5 billion. (Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 12 Aug 94 p D-2)

Luis Hidalgo, president of the Agricultural Supply and Services Corporation, has refuted statements made by Imerca coordinator Maria Cristina Iglesias, who has said Caracas has food supplies for only seven days. He has said reports on food shortages have been exaggerated, adding that Caracas and Venezuela have enough foodstuffs to meet the people's demand for food. He has recognized that products such as cooking oil and wheat are indeed running out and that the recent exchange control measures have indeed affected the flow of foreign exchange. Hidalgo has said the government is compelled, in case of shortages, to import staples directly, as is the case with powdered milk, emphasizing Venezuela has ample supplies of vegetables, fruits, meats, poultry, and other products. (Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 12 Aug 94)

Henry Bencid, president of the National Congress Policies, Security, and Defense Subcommission, has said Venezuela will have to request additional credits next year to cover a fiscal deficit amounting to 400 billion bolivares. The foreign debt represents 25 percent of the national budget. (Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 14 Aug 94)

In order to reestablish commercial relations between Venezuelan and foreign companies, the Foreign Exchange Administration Board has decided to pay in advance 20 percent of the letters of credit to prevent shortages. Raul Matos Azocar, the new spokesman for the Foreign Exchange Administration Board, has said the fee to register importers will be received until 31 October. The Foreign Exchange Administration Technical Office will be able to directly grant permits to exchange up to $1 million. (Caracas Union Radio Network in Spanish 2200 GMT 15 Aug 94)

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